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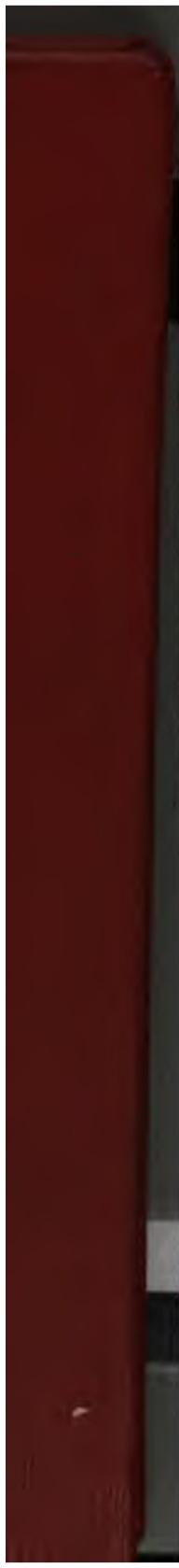
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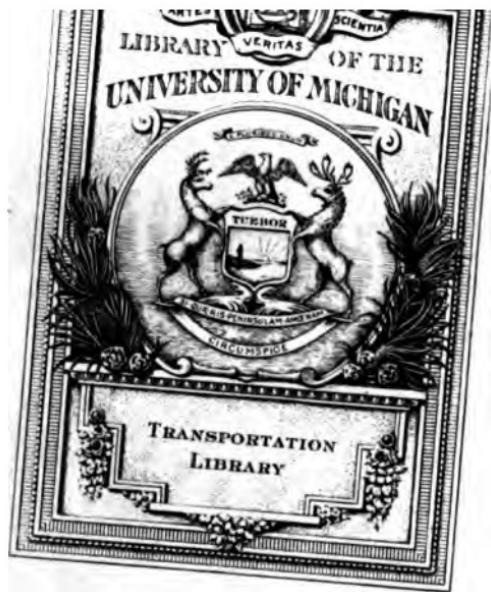
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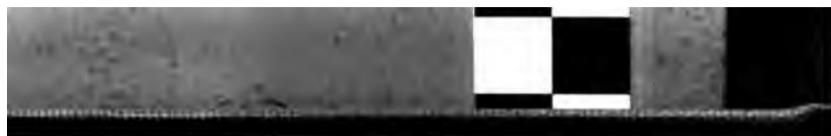


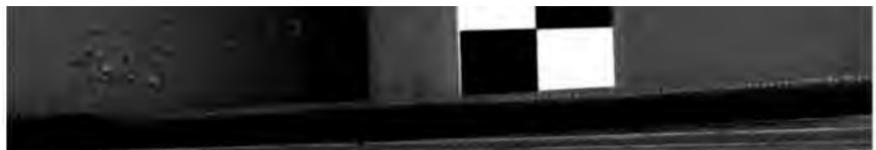


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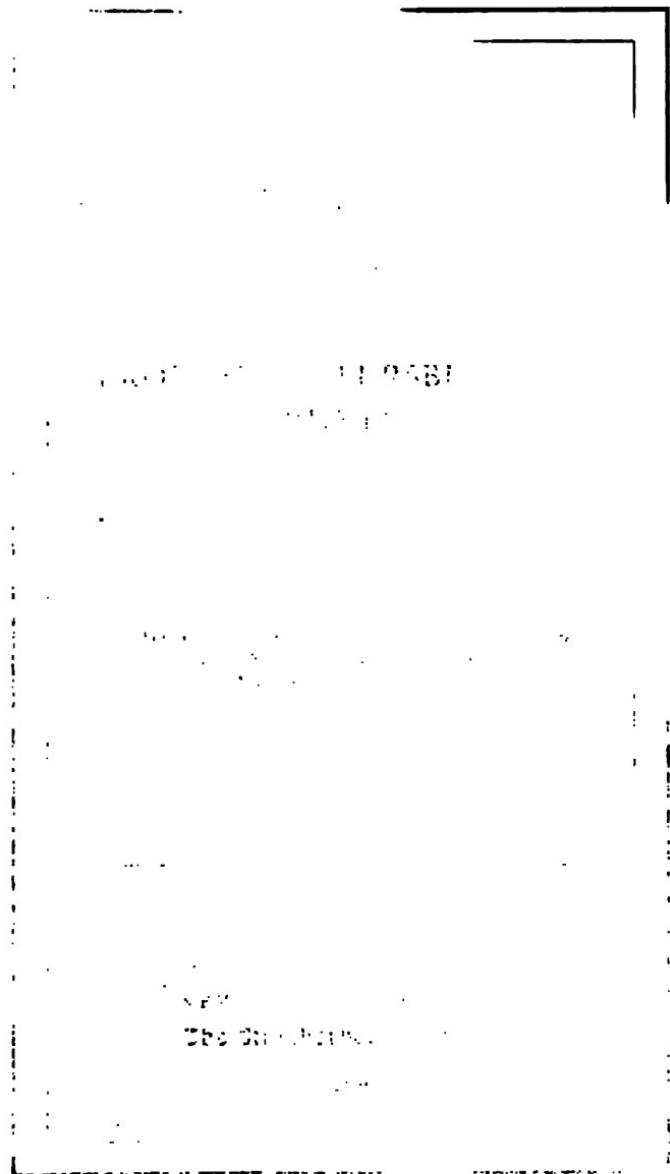
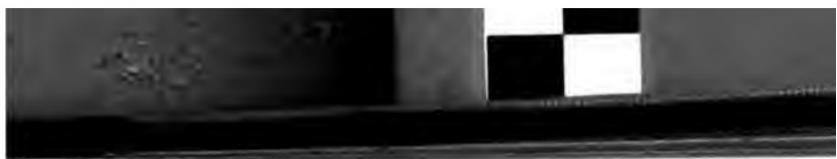




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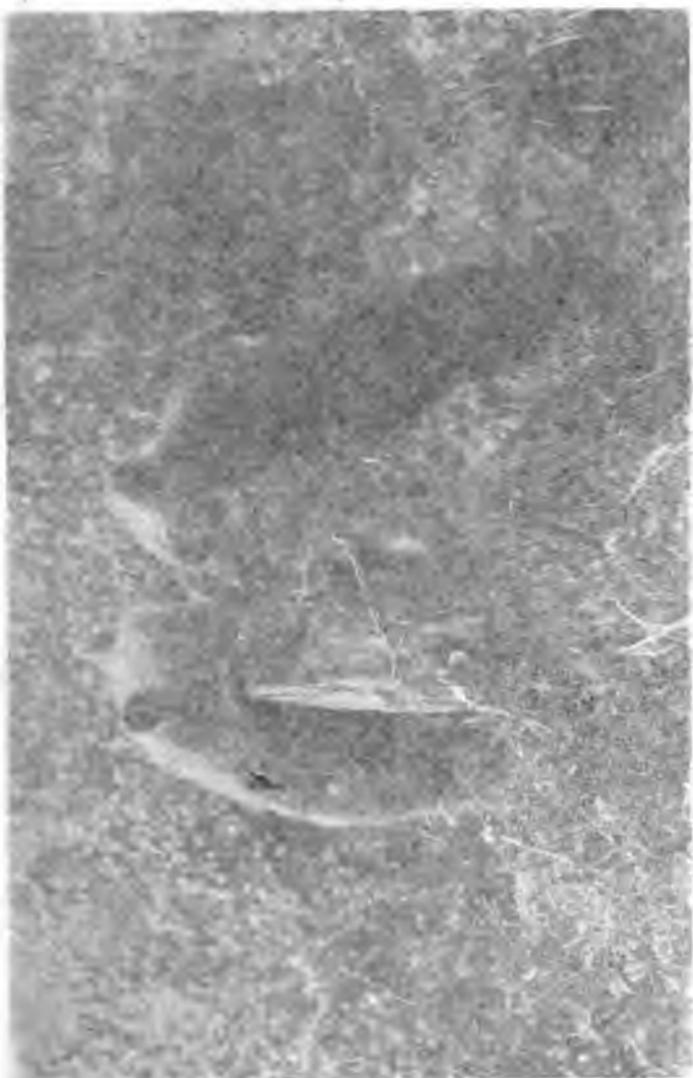
ONE OF THE "FIRST FAMILIES" OF SIBERIA.





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THE  
GREAT SIBERIAN  
RAILWAY

FROM ST. PETERSBURG TO  
PEKIN

BY

MICHAEL MYERS SHOEMAKER

Author of "Islands of the Southern Seas," "Quaint Corners  
of Ancient Empires," "Palaces and Prisons of  
Mary Queen of Scots," etc.

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS  
NEW YORK AND LONDON  
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1904





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*Trans Sib.*



## PREFACE

THE Siberian Railway open for traffic stands as the first great enterprise of the twentieth century. Built by order of the late Czar Alexander, the Russians have rolled out its long ribbons of steel until they have dropped the ends into the waters of the Pacific Ocean at Vladivostok and at Port Arthur. As they have moved eastward they have thrown out branch lines on the south towards Turkestan, on the north into the wilderness of Siberia. The traveller to-day may enter at Moscow a train more luxurious and comfortable than any other in the world, and it is possible to roll that train into Port Arthur. However, this is not done as yet, as the eastern sections of the road are scarcely ready for it, and Lake Baikal must be crossed upon either the ice or the ice-breaker as the season demands. It will be years before the rails will be laid around that lake,—years of very difficult work and entailing enormous expenses, but it will be done at last, and then this railway will take its place amongst the most important works of the world. To my thinking it has already done so.

The following pages are the record of my journey over the line last spring from Petersburg to Pekin, with a *detour* to Korea. All of my facts and figures

✓ have been taken from that most important work of the Ministry of Ways and Means of Communication, *Guide to the Great Siberian Railway*. That book will scarcely come into the hands of the American public and I have therefore included sections thereof or quoted very fully from its pages, and believe that the statements made are to be relied upon as facts.

One reviewer claims that these notes are too pro-Russian—that I have said nothing about the supposed frauds and dishonesties connected with the building of this railway. Certainly not. I do not consider that a mere book of travels has any place for such matter.

To those interested in the progress of the great Empire of the North I can recommend nothing more interesting than a journey from ocean to ocean over this her great railway.

M. M. S.

UNION CLUB, Nov., 1902.





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## **THE GREAT SIBERIAN RAILWAY**





# THE GREAT SIBERIAN RAILWAY

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## CHAPTER I

### FIRST MOVEMENTS OF THE ENTERPRISE

"TO THE GRAND DUKE TSAREVICH:

"*Your Imperial Highness:*

"Having given the order to build a continuous line of railway across Siberia, which is to unite the rich Siberian provinces with the railway system of the Interior, I entrust to you to declare My will, upon your entering the Russian dominions after your inspection of the foreign countries of the East. At the same time, I desire you to lay the first stone at Vladivostok for the construction of the Ussuri line, forming part of the Siberian Railway, which is to be carried out at the cost of the State and under direction of the Government. Your participation in the achievement of this work will be a testimony to My ardent desire to facilitate the communications between Siberia and the other countries of the Em-

## 2      The Great Siberian Railway

pire and to manifest My extreme anxiety to secure the peaceful prosperity of this Country.

"I remain your sincerely loving

"ALEXANDER.

"March 17, 1891."

It was not until the territories of the Amur and Ussuri provinces were, by the treaty of Pekin, annexed to Siberia that Russia awoke to the importance of a band of iron from ocean to ocean across her vast dominions. If she would hold her place amongst the nations, the development of her provinces in Asia became, from a commercial and military standpoint, an absolute necessity. Towards the end of the sixties the enterprise was first heard of, but only "heard of," as little was done at that time. Several lines were talked over, and of those all were cast aside save three. One by Ekaterinburg and Tumen, one *via* Nizhni-Novgorod, and one by Ufa and Cheliabinsk.

Troubles at home and foreign wars caused the project to be laid aside for a time, though it was never lost sight of, being under constant discussion.

The great bridge over the Volga was constructed under Alexander II. in 1880, thereby connecting Orenberg with European Russia. To-day a line is being run south-eastward from the town of that name, and shortly through trains will roll into Tashkent, Samarkand, and Bokhara from Petersburg and Paris, and the picturesque Orient will disappear forever.

It was in 1886 that the late Czar traced with his own hand the following:

## First Movements of the Enterprise 3

"I have read many reports of the Governor-General of Siberia and must own with grief and shame that until now the Government has done scarcely anything towards satisfying the needs of this rich but neglected country. It is time, high time."

The opening of the Canadian Pacific Railway, with its fleet of fast ships across the western ocean, the introduction of the telegraph into China, and the building of Chinese steamers on the Sungari and Amur rivers, together with the military movements in that Empire, excited the attention of Russia. Then his Majesty announced that it was "necessary to proceed at once to the construction of this line."

For strategical reasons, Vladivostok must be connected at once with the Ussuri and the Amur basin, or she would be shut off from all the Empire save by sea.

The Imperial Rescript, dated March 17, 1891, and addressed to the Grand Duke Tsarevich, which is quoted at the commencement of this chapter, finally decided the construction of this great railroad.

The first move was made at Vladivostok, when the Tsarevich, on May 19th, trundled the first wheelbarrow of earth and then laid the first stone.

Built at the cost of the Government, the different sections were "ordered" to be completed by certain dates; that from Cheliabinsk on the frontier to Krasnoyarsk, 2059 versts in 1896; the Irkutsk section of 1023 versts in 1900; the section from Vladivostok to Grafskaya in 1894. Upon the section around the Baikal no limit was placed, and it will not be completed for many years, being very difficult work,—in fact, the only difficult work on the

## 4      The Great Siberian Railway

entire route. The sum of 150,000,000 roubles was appropriated for the construction of the road, which included some 20,000,000 for subsidiary objects.

Under the presidency of one appointed by the Czar there was a committee organized to carry on the work. The present Emperor was the first President, and at its first meeting in 1893 addressed the following words:

"In opening the first meeting of the Committee for the construction of the Siberian Railway, I contemplate with emotion the grandeur of the task before us. But love of my country and an ardent desire to contribute to its welfare have induced me to accept the commission from my beloved Father. I am convinced that you are animated by the same feelings, and that our joint efforts will bring us to the desired end."

The execution of the work was first entrusted to the Board of State Railways, but later a special board was appointed. The Czar retained the post of President after the decease of his father and his own accession to the throne, and in November, 1894, addressed the following words to the Committee:

"Gentlemen: To have begun the construction of the railway line across Siberia is one of the greatest achievements of the glorious reign of my never-to-be-forgotten Father. The fulfilment of this essentially peaceful work, entrusted to me by my beloved Father, is my sacred duty and my sincere desire. With your assistance, I hope to complete the construction of the Siberian line, and to have it done cheaply and, most important of all, quickly and solidly."

## First Movements of the Enterprise 5

After having heard the words of his Majesty, the Vice-President of the Committee, Actual Privy Councillor Bunge, expressed as follows the feelings of all the members:

"We are most happy that in accordance with Your Imperial Majesty's desire, the work of construction of the Siberian Railway will remain under Your Majesty's immediate direction. At the time of Your visit to distant lands, Your Majesty took the first step at Vladivostok towards the execution of the Siberian Railway. Upon your Majesty's return, You were appointed President of the Committee for the construction of the Siberian line by the late Emperor, Who thus assured the fulfilment of the task entrusted to the Committee, which always was the object of Your constant endeavour. At present, Your Majesty having desired to retain the direction of this vast enterprise, which is to connect European Russia with the shore of the Pacific Ocean, we are convinced that this grand work bequeathed to Your Majesty by Your Imperial Father will be brought to a successful end and constitute the glory of the late and present reigns."

The construction of the road was one of the dearest objects of the late Emperor, and seems to have been accepted as a command by his son.

It is stated that especial attention was paid to the solid construction of the permanent way, but the rails are but eighteen pounds to the foot, hence such a speed as we maintain on our roads is not possible. The gauge is five feet.

When the Russo-Chinese Bank acquired a concession from China for the construction of the Man-

## 6      The Great Siberian Railway

churian road, it was considered necessary to build a branch line of the Trans-Siberian, connecting therewith, and a joint stock company for the East Chinese Railway was organised. The plan of this line ended the necessity for continuing the line to the Amur River and also of the Trans-Baikal line from Stretensk east. In their stead was constructed the branch line connecting with the Chinese road, and which shortened the distance of the whole route some five hundred versts. Both north and south from the Siberian Railway branch lines have been determined upon, and some constructed. If the entire plan is carried out, Siberia will shortly show a network of roads in all directions.

Mining parties have discovered deposits of fuel at many points on the route, but at present wood is used in the engines.

Minerals of every description have been discovered, and it is claimed that the Transvaal is poor indeed by comparison with this far northern land.

The influence of the railway is already noticed in a desire to improve the waterways of the land, hitherto woefully neglected. They are the natural feeders of the line.

Judging by the official guide, Russia is awakening at last, and moving forward. Let us hope that the result will be more marked in twenty years than one observes to-day, after that lapse of time, in her towns, with their numberless universities, schools, gymnasiums, etc.,—but shall we not set forth and see for ourselves what has been done and will be done in that far-distant, sad Siberian country? Tasmania has never recovered from the years during



## First Movements of the Enterprise 7

which she was cursed by the presence of the convicts. Will the same be said of Siberia half a century hence? Probably not, because she lies on the world's highway, and is not isolated in that far-off southern sea where beautiful Tasmania sleeps the years away.





## CHAPTER II

### LIFE IN ST. PETERSBURG

**S**T. PETERSBURG is to my thinking the most stately city in the world. It is not so beautiful as Paris, nor so bright as New York, nor does it impress you with immensity like London, but it is very stately, very grand. Indeed, as I stood on the steps of St. Isaac's this morning, a church which always reminds one of the Pantheon of Rome, I could not but think that this far northern capital of Peter was verily like ancient Rome, in fact, far more so than is that city to-day. The sombre magnificence of St. Isaac's gorgeous columned portal rose behind me, while off and away swept the many avenues, all of magnificent width and length. Across the Neva, far grander than the Tiber, the Arsenal rears its stately columns, while on all sides spread palaces and houses, all of them stately in their outlines. Through the brilliant sunlight passed a funeral train which would have done justice to the city of Nero. The catafalque, richly carved in garlands, and painted white, bore aloft a coffin standing on lions' feet, and covered with gold cloth. Across it was thrown a white satin scarf embroidered in brilliant colours, and

wreaths of artificial flowers, as well as natural, were festooned over the whole. Four black horses draped in white drew the car of the dead, while from a small cart in front sprigs of green were cast in its pathway. Surely very Roman, the whole of it.

Yesterday I saw a funeral with a bright pink coffin. These Russians never use black save in their own dress as mourners, and if it is a military funeral they don their most gorgeous uniforms, merely placing a crepe band on the arm. Yesterday on a long esplanade near St. Isaac's the people held their yearly Easter bazaar. Little booths were ranged on both sides for half a mile, and between them the people thronged, with the nearest approach to gayety which I have seen in Russia. This season appears to take the place of our Christmas in its form of observance. These booths are filled with toys of all sorts—cheap toys. There are many-sized globes holding goldfish, and all sorts of small lizards; there are Easter eggs of brilliant colouring, thousands of toy balloons, and cages holding canaries and bullfinches. It must be cold for the little songsters, but they carol and pipe away in the gayest fashion, and Russia appears almost happy.

Yesterday morning St. Petersburg awoke to the news that Sipianguine, Minister of the Interior, had been assassinated. A student who had been taken from the University at Kief for some offence, forced to serve in the army for a year, and then forbidden to return to the University, swore that he would have revenge. Securing in some manner the uniform of an aide, he went to the department and demanded to see the Minister on important

## 10      The Great Siberian Railway

business from the Grand Duke Serge. In a few moments the victim appeared, demanding to know what was wanted, and was immediately shot in neck and heart, dying almost instantly. There was no attempt to escape on the part of the murderer, who will be sent to Siberia—the island of Sakhalin—for twenty years, that being the full penalty of the law. Russia does not inflict capital punishment save for attacks upon the Royal family and treason during the time of war.

This morning the city is as quiet as usual. There is absolutely no sensation or disturbance. The looker-on would never know that a tragedy had occurred. There are no bulletin boards with their attendant crowds, no street cries. There never are in Russia. When the Czar was assassinated the populace simply retired into their houses and shut their doors, while a dead silence wrapped this great city,—a silence more impressive than the wildest tumult. To-day if knots of people were to gather on these streets they would be told to move on, and they would promptly obey.

St. Petersburg is a singular city. While there are constant society functions going on, giving those invited plenty to occupy their time,—while there are some few theatres and the opera in season, there is no place to which a man about town may wander of an evening save, in summer, the garden of the “Islands.” All the brilliant gayety of the streets of Paris and New York is altogether lacking, hence dinner at some café—and the desirable ones are few in number—is prolonged to an interminable length. Last evening we sat until 10.30, simply because

there was no other place to go to. It is said that this is because the Government does not desire those meeting-places, considering them dangerous. Be that as it may, they are not here, yet the haunts of vice are many and gorgeous, and that life is probably faster and more furious here than in any other city, Paris not excepted.

Religious ceremonies for the murdered Minister commenced immediately upon his death, and have continued and will so continue for some time. This morning the burial occurred and from the windows of a friend's house next door I watched the departure of the funeral cortège. All the Court of Russia from the Emperor and Empress down, all the high dignitaries of Church and State, attended in solemn procession. Gorgeous vestments mingled with splendid uniforms, all glittering under a vivid sunshine. Traffic was entirely suspended in the vicinity of the house, even the launches on the canal just in front being forced to wait upon the dead. The catafalque—there are no hearses in Russia—was of white wood with a silver railing, and was drawn by six black horses, draped in white. At the head of each horse walked a man in white,—hat and all. The coffin was white, and when placed on the catafalque was draped in white silk embroidered in gold, and some wreaths were placed upon it. It was borne from the house on the shoulders of the Czar, his brother, and the members of the Imperial Cabinet. It was of metal and must have been very heavy. They themselves placed it upon the catafalque, and stood with uncovered heads until the cortège had moved away.

The procession was headed by a white two-wheeled

The coffin was preceded  
ment of soldiers, while th  
Emperor and Imperial fami  
**The cortège was not large.**

Shortly after it had dis  
Czarina drove off. His Ma  
of health, and is a finer and  
of manhood than his cousin  
whom he so strongly resemb  
degree, his father's breadth c  
he appears to do so in his un

The Empress, a large blonde  
taller than her husband.

The royal carriage did not  
in any way, and in fact one  
any and all hours, and, I am  
unattended.

While the streets near the  
were lined with silent, respectf  
out the whole city there was  
citement, much less any distur  
did not seem to be interested

Petersburg auth...  
...

now in the Embassy here, were, also according to custom, left with very little of this world's goods. The funeral ceremonies were conducted with all the Chinese state necessary to such an exalted personage, and the remains temporarily deposited in a vault in a Lutheran church here. In due time the son arrived, but all Petersburg was astonished at the news of a few days later. The poor fellow was found "strangled with a silken cord," and by him a letter stating his full appreciation of his own unworthiness to conduct his father's remains to China. The property would pass by his death to the second wife and her children. It is not believed in Petersburg that it is a case of suicide, but the Embassy is Chinese territory, and the Russian authorities cannot enter or examine; so the Chinese Minister at Berlin has been summoned for the purpose. The authorities make no charges against any one, but the theory of suicide, as I have stated, is not believed. We shall probably never hear anything more about it.

The Russians cannot amuse themselves as we understand the word. In their dancing they are solemn to a degree, and never smile. When the men get drunk they seem to break loose. A drunken man is simply let alone until he sobers up and goes to work. He does not lose his job. It would seem that the feasts and fasts of the Church are largely to blame for the drunkenness of the people. Next week, for instance, comes their Easter, and for eleven days of feast the business of the nation is almost at a complete standstill. Naturally Satan comes down upon those idle hands. These feasts and fasts are

or an American. A spec  
of several troubles was in  
the passage of the cortège  
where it might meet the C  
of his carriage and walk throu  
Hence the tax. But as to  
not seem exactly clear.

But one corpse at a time :  
and when this funeral rea  
they found another ahead  
over which there were mo  
which being concluded, he  
car and run on to a side track.  
Dead or living are never in :





## CHAPTER III

### ST. PETERSBURG TO MOSCOW

ST. PETERSBURG, April 20, 1902.

HAVING secured (through our Embassy) a servant who speaks German, and, of course, Russian, I have booked upon the Siberian Express, which leaves Moscow on Wednesday evening next at 10 P.M. It is some thirty-four hundred miles to Irkutsk, and we shall be nine days *en route*. Not a rapid journey, being but about 377 miles in twenty-four hours. But things are never in a hurry in Russia, save the drosky drivers, and the road is not built for such speed as Western Europe is accustomed to.

To Irkutsk I have paid 244 roubles, which includes my fare first-class—a compartment to myself—and a passage second-class (sleeper included) for my man. If you are willing to have some one in your compartment you will pay out 111 roubles. Of course, to these figures you must add the charges for your meals and luggage. The latter is very costly. I regret that I could not find place on the train of Saturday last, as some friends were going out on it, but it was crowded, and though there were more than enough applications to fill up another car, the



## 16 The Great Siberian Railway

railway authorities would not consider the proposition for an instant,—having, I suppose, good reason for their refusal. I am assured by the agents in Petersburg that there is no difference between that train and the one I am booked for on Wednesday next. I have interviewed several of the officials on that point, and all tell the same tale, but people outside say differently. Mr. ——, of our legation, being desirous of seeing the "*great* train," went to the station in Moscow for the purpose, having been told that it would start on that night. When it backed in it was only an ordinary train, and then the officials confessed that they would not tell upon what day the "*great train*" left, as the crowd was such that they could not handle it. However, as I have my compartment to myself and my own servant, and as I know there will be a restaurant car, I shall go on, rather than wait "two weeks." I discover later that even the train of last week was not the "*grand international*."

The Nevski is brilliant and gay with crowds and colour, as I drive away from the Hotel d'Europe. The sky is golden with the sunset, and the air balmy and springlike, though snow is everywhere.

A vast multitude throngs the Moscow station, but there is no such confusion as at Baku. The third class are separate and apart, while the waiting rooms of the first and second are full of a gay, orderly crowd,—hundreds of officers adding colour by their uniforms to the moving picture. As usual the tea-room is full. If the traveller only takes the trouble to send his luggage an hour ahead of train time he may wait until the last moment,

but he must do that. There is never any hurrying or crowding these officials, so do not try it.

We pull out at 8 P.M., and glide quietly off into the night, having, as we clear the city, a fine view of the moon in eclipse.

In the middle of the night I am routed out by a hot-box, and in company with the others of our car hustle through the cold air, and into another car, where, too weary to undress again, I fall fast asleep, wrapped in a fur overcoat—which, if you are wise, you will always bring on such a tour. It is both health and comfort to you.

The flashing sunlight of early morning forces me to draw back the curtain and gaze outward. This is Russia!—limitless pine forests, limitless snow, which the glowing light of the sun turns to a lurid crimson; the fitting home for wolves and bears,—the Russia of Ivan the Terrible, and Peter the Great. Lagoons and rivers filled with broken ice add to the arctic appearance.

As we approach Moscow, the country becomes more populated. Yonder is a walled-in monastery, all a mass of towers and glittering domes, and now some rich estate with its stately white palace in a dense wood, out of which the golden domes of the private chapel rise glistening in the sun, and finally the bewildering panorama of the Tartar city.





## CHAPTER IV

### LIFE IN MOSCOW

IT would be difficult to imagine two cities more entirely different, the one from the other, than St. Petersburg and Moscow. The former a gay, modern, European capital, the latter wholly Oriental, wholly Asian, a vast city of more than a million inhabitants, bustling and busy, a much better business place than the capital.

From the centre rises the Kremlin, its campaniles, domes, and palaces glittering with gold and many colours, and still surrounded by the old Tartar wall, which Peter decorated with the heads of his nobility. There are many stately gateways to the wall, and outside the Holy Portal, to pass under which all must bare the head, is the Cathedral of St. Basil, the most marvellous specimen the world holds of barbaric outline and colour, a thing impossible to portray save by a picture.

The Kremlin stands high, with the Mosk River sweeping round its base, and away from it on all sides spreads the city, where every house possesses a roof of brilliant colour, and all the church towers, which rise by the hundreds, glitter with stars. But

far and away the most beautiful of all is St. Saviour's. Its white walls rise across the river, supporting a great dome and four small ones, all covered with plates of pure gold. This is the great cathedral of Moscow.

The Greek Church is celebrating Holy Week, and crowds are moving towards this church, where the Metropolitan of the city will conduct the services. All the vast spaces of the Kremlin and the surrounding squares and streets are black with people bound for the many churches and shrines. Every Russian, be he of high or low degree, must go to church to-day and to-morrow.

Let us follow to St. Saviour's. To my thinking, there is something almost heathenish in the services of the Russian Church, and those in St. Saviour's to-day impress me more fully that such is the case. The vast spaces of the church are crowded with an enormous multitude, all standing; there are seats for none in these Russian shrines. Around and above, the walls rise a glittering mass of marbles and precious stones, gold and silver, while through the painted windows of the domes the cold sunlight casts long rays downward upon the high altar glittering in the distance. Nothing save the voice of man may be raised in the praise of God here, and the voices of the choir, mingling with the prayers of the people, sound like a far-off sea. Within the arches of the high altar one can distinctly see the image of the Virgin, encircled and crowned with points of light. Before and around it pass and repass the Metropolitan and his attendant priests, all the while chanting in voices which resemble nothing so greatly

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as the bellowing of huge bulls. The whole is barbaric and heathen, recalling to my memory the shrines of Vishnu in the temple of Madura. The people surge here in just such masses, and do not appear to be any more civilised; indeed, these dull-eyed, heavy-featured peasants cannot compare favourably with the clear-cut, intellectual faces one meets with in India. As I pass from the cathedral and gaze downward upon the masses which surge around its esplanade, there is not an interesting face amongst them. If there is intelligence there, the mask which hides it is perfect.

Matters are not peaceful in this great city. The Chief of the Moscow police received some time since a very handsome imitation coffin, with the reminder that, though the last attempt upon his life had failed, there were two hundred men in line waiting to try their hand, and thus his time would surely come. Up to the present day the dissatisfaction has arisen from the middle classes, especially the students, but now for the first time in Russia's history it is spreading downward to the peasants, who are becoming dissatisfied with their condition, but it will be a century at least before that vast inert mass awakens to life. If it ever does, unless the awakening comes by slow degrees, the horrors of '93 will pale by comparison.

At this season of the year daylight fades at an early hour, and though one's interest in this city may be great, still its streets are not attractive after dark, and the traveller soon turns to his hotel, where he will pass the hours of the evening as best he may, generally going to bed early because he has nothing else to do.

I was more fortunate and, judging by my experience during those hours, these Russians are the very soul of hospitality. On the train I had met a young man with whom I held some conversation. He asked if I would dine with him, to which I gladly consented, supposing he meant at an hotel or club. About 6.30 he came to the hotel in full dress. I was travel-stained and very weary, but there was nothing to do but apologise and go. So I donned my fur coat,—it is cold here,—and he handed me into a handsome little drosky drawn by a superb black horse, which rushed along at an alarming rate while I held on for dear life. On and on and on, through miles of streets and into a part of the town I had never seen before, until, finally, we drew up before a two-story house which I thought must be a club. A servant in livery opened the door, ushered us up-stairs, and took our coats and hats. Then we passed into a large salon with polished floor, a grand piano, and a group of stuffed bears,—a club surely, I thought, and came near so expressing myself. Fortunately I said nothing. Passing this and a finely appointed drawing-room, I was ushered into the midst of a Russian family at dinner. I confess I was nonplussed for an instant, but the hostess came forward and with hands extended bade me, in very good English, a hearty welcome. There was nothing to do save subside into my chair and eat my dinner, which I did. It was a very good meal. The only item which seemed particularly Russian was some cold fish, cooked, and very palatable. There were several kinds of wines and there was vodki, of course. The conversation was in Russian,

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French, German, and English. All seemed very glad to see me, whom certainly *none* had known as existing twelve hours previously. I have been in the houses of many old acquaintances where I have felt less at home. Surely such a thing could not happen in America or in England. Is it simply a warm-hearted hospitality, or are these Russians better judges of character than the Anglo-Saxon,—therefore knowing a gentleman when they see one?

I passed several hours with this family, conversing with the ladies, while the men played that favourite game of the Russians, "Preference." Vodki and cognac, together with all sorts of sweets, cigars, and cigarettes, were pressed upon me, of all of which I felt it necessary to partake, assuring myself that there would be no sleep for me that night.

Some Russian music followed. It was either rather sad in character or wildly gay, but generally the former. Later on, tea was served in the dining-room with more sweets and the drink called kvas, made of the juice of the cranberry, and most healthy.

I noticed after dinner the maintenance of the purely Russian and very picturesque custom of thanking the hostess. All the women kissed her on the cheek and all the men on the hand. She hesitated when she came to me, but together with all the rest seemed delighted when, with a deep bow, I followed the nation's custom.

Amongst the group there was a fine-looking young student, in uniform. I asked my hostess the cause of the trouble amongst these students of which the outer world hears so much. She replied that they were generally caused by the youngest class, which

knew nothing about the question of the moment, whatever it might happen to be. Not but what she thought there were often real grievances, but rarely concerning these boys.

As we entered the music-room she informed me that the group of bears, a mother and two cubs, or rather the mother bear, had been shot by her husband. An attempt to raise the cubs was made, but they were too savage and it became necessary to kill them. So here the family is, united and in apparently good condition. The work is beautifully done, and the fur as glossy as in life. I note that all furs seem to recover their vitality in cold weather. My over-coat appeared almost to droop in Persia, but here it fairly bristles with life. So it was with these bears, shot near a small town in the country.

But time presses; my train for the East starts shortly, and so I bid farewell to these pleasant people, thanking them most heartily for what would otherwise have been a stupid six hours' wait. At the door my acquaintance of the train confides me to the care of his drosky man, whose great black horse whirls me away to the hotel. After the cheery, pleasant evening I confess to a decided feeling of loneliness as I am rushed through the streets of the dark city, unknown and unnoticed save by the police, who never neglect any one in Russia.



## CHAPTER V

### FROM MOSCOW OVER THE

THE Siberian train starts at 10 time. My man has gone ahe since, and at nine I leave the hotel consigned to the care of a drosky di no means ever certain that these m what is said to them, even by one of tion, and many times I have been tal of my way. Only yesterday, thou directions by the hotel porter, one of kept me going for two hours, and wou reached the right place but that I ha an English sign, and so found out wh Such a state of affairs to-night would I am decidedly anxious, especially as I stood that the train would leave from terminus. I was wrong in that.

Moving very hard - - -

## From Moscow over the Urals 25

droskies going in the same direction, and apparently containing travellers and their luggage. After thirty-five minutes of most uncomfortable shaking over dreadful streets I reach the terminus, where I promptly overpay my man, so thankful am I to get there.

This station is for this line alone, and is a spacious, handsome structure. The third-class room, well off to the right, has nothing in it save some three or four hundred people camping on the floor. In the baggage-room there is comparatively little confusion, as few journey by this train. The first- and second-class room, a large, handsome apartment, is furnished with upholstered chairs in yellow stuff with loose covers, while beyond is a supper-room, all very attractive, though Russian cooking does not appeal to Western palates.

In one corner are a lot of Mongolians in gay brocades, *en route* to the Celestial Empire.

The traveller from the West is struck by the utter absence of that impatience in waiting which is part and parcel of travel in his own land. These people might be here simply to spend a pleasant evening. They are gathered around the supper tables or lounging on the divans and seem to have no intention of going anywhere. Finally a door slides open and a man in uniform murmurs the names, "Samara, Cheliabinsk, Omsk, Irkutsk." Then they rise and move quietly out to the train. It is composed of four coaches,—two second-class, one first-, and a combination car, part restaurant, part for the kitchen, and the rest for the luggage. There is also in it a bathroom, for the use of any or all, I fancy.

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The restaurant car is just like all those on the trains of Europe. There is a piano, generally used to hold dirty dishes. There are three very stupid waiters, who speak nothing save Russian. The food is very poor, as I discover later. The first-class car is good enough, but not so well furnished or comfortable as those from Baku to Moscow or Moscow to Petersburg. The same can be said of the second-class. Evidently the famous train one reads so much about was the international of last week.

I question the conductor of this train as to the difference, and he states that that train is somewhat larger and is more luxuriously furnished, but that the food is no better, though they have waiters who speak French. This train certainly possesses all which the guide books rave over. There are, for instance, the piano, and the bath, but save for the electric light it is not, as I have said, so good as the train from Baku, but on such a journey the electric lights make a vast difference. They are in globes over the door, and the table in each compartment possesses a movable light with a green porcelain shade. What a comfort that will be during the long hours of darkness for the next ten days can be better imagined than described.

Promptly at 10 P.M. on Wednesday, April 23rd, we move off into the night and my long journey has begun. Lowering the shade of the window, I summon the porter, have the bed made up, and, retiring, seize that lamp and read for an hour by its mellow light, read until I almost drop the lamp on to the floor and myself to sleep. So turning out the light I pass into dreamland as the train rolls on towards Siberia.

## From Moscow over the Urals 27

All the next day the steppes of Russia spread out around us,—dreary and black, awaiting the upcoming of the grain. There is nothing to look at outside and not an interesting crowd inside. This carriage holds some four or five Frenchmen *en route* to the gold mines of the Urals, and with them I have long confabs in French over my route. There are some few Russians to whom I cannot talk, and there are a French Consul and his wife *en route* to China—most pleasant people and very kind to me on the journey. They have a fox-terrier along which promptly domesticates itself in my compartment. Its master speaks English, I am happy to say.

There are two dressing-rooms, one at either end of this car, but one must have towels and soap. There is nothing there save water, but there is plenty of water. That very necessary article was scarce in Russian trains even as late as 1894.

All day long the scenery continues deadly monotonous. The towns and villages are few and far between, and one has nothing to do save read. On the morning of the second day, Friday, at about seven o'clock, we cross the Volga at Samara, some eight hundred and forty-three miles from Moscow—cross it on a fine iron bridge, the "Alexander." I am awakened by the rumbling of the train and find the yellow floods of that great river rolling beneath me.

This bridge has 13 spans of 50 sazhens each (a sazhen is 7 feet), a total length of 650 sazhens, and a distance of 674 sazhens between abutments. It is built on the double-girder system with parallel cords, the roadway upon the lower cords. The

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rails are laid on metal beams; the piers and abutments are of iron and the ice-breakers covered with granite from Finland. All the tiers are laid in cement, the right abutment rests on rocks, and the left is supported by piles.

Some miles east of the bridge, on the river, is the town of Samara (the Volga here taking a great loop to the east). It possesses a population of ninety thousand, but holds nothing of interest for the tourist. Here the river is free of ice from the middle of April to the middle of December. I was surprised to learn that even in St. Petersburg the snows do not set in until December.

The Volga is the great waterway of Russia. From Samara to its mouth at Astrakhan, on the Caspian, it rolls onward, a vast yellow flood, with low, flat banks, monotonous and uninteresting, but to the north, towards Nizhni-Novgorod, it improves and is of interest to the tourist, who may spend several pleasant days on this journey, comfortably cared for in an American steamboat. This river passes through the greatest grain-fields of the Empire, the mills of Samara alone producing ten million pounds of flour yearly, and yet one hears that these poor peasants starve, starve, starve. Surely nothing could be more suddenly miserable than that group yonder, wrapped in rolls of filthy rags and dirty furs, with straw bound round their feet. The poor man supports a family on ten roubles a month (five dollars). They live on bread and kvas, made of bread soaked in water. In St. Petersburg a room is often rented to four families, each occupying a corner thereof. A single window is rented, and a corner by ventila-

GREAT BRIDGE OVER THE VOLGA.





## From Moscow over the Urals 29

tion commands a premium. The Russians go to the bath-house once a week, are well steamed out, and then roll naked in the snow, but they go back into the same bundles of filth and vermin.

Yonder stands a fair specimen of a Russian peasant: a fat woman, clad in a pair of the coarsest of men's boots, over which falls the edge of a once white petticoat, with a ragged edge of a calico skirt and a top garment of skin with the fur inside; on the head a mass of green rags bound in by a red scarf; in the arms a bundle, which, if shaken, would, I fancy, evolve a baby; the whole is stuccoed with filth. They are a horrid lot. A wretched little boy came begging to me just now, and I gave him a copper coin. Another approached, whereupon the first promptly spat in his face and drove him off, grinning at me as he did it.

Now that there is naught to see, the weather has cleared and the sun shines brilliantly. However, though the prospect is uninteresting outside, the types of Russia's people, always on view, are not so. Near me in the dining-car sits an officer as burly as the Russian bear, while across the car is one as typically Russian, yet differing from the first man in every point: tall and slender, his hair and eyebrows are so yellow that they are almost white. Beneath the latter gleam a pair of sky-blue eyes, guarding a delicate nose. A blond moustache shades a small mouth with very red lips. The complexion is white and pink and throbbing. He wears a flat-topped pink cap, light grey coat with much gold braid upon it, while his trowsers of pale blue are corded in pink, and strapped over patent-leather shoes, set off by

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silver spurs. He is pretty to look at and knows it. After all, the uniforms play a great part in these nations of the Old World. If they were done away with, the peacock called man would soon cause the standing armies to cease to exist, and thus the thrones would totter to their fall. Certainly all is vanity, but the vanity of the soldier holds the crown on many a head the world over.

On the platform outside stands a blond giant. His long brown overcoat just clears the spurs on his high black boots, while a red cap like a Turkish fez, with a black astrakhan border, is topped by a white standing brush-like plume, rising from the royal arms in silver. He is nothing save a common policeman, yet possessing because of his dress a dignity and self-respect that yonder peasant, an equally good-looking man, entirely lacks as he lounges in dirty, black, greasy clothing against that doorpost.

All day long eastward over these rich plains of Eastern Russia. As night approaches the green-domed churches and green-roofed white villages vanish from sight, and as the stars come out in the heavens the peasants go plodding homeward to their thatched hovels. There is none of the joyousness to be seen which is so apparent with most peoples when the day's work is done. Even the dogs follow their masters with a depressed air, never venturing a solitary bark, much less a wild scurry after a rabbit, or after nothing save their own joyous spirits. With the beggars—and there are few of them—there is none of the wild importunity of Persia. They approach quietly and almost whisper, and at the first sign of refusal retreat as though struck.

## From Moscow over the Urals 31

Late on Friday night we pass Ufa on the Bélaya River. The district known as that of Bashkiria derives its name from the Bashkirs, the inhabitants of this district from remote times. They submitted to the dominion of Russia when that Government was struggling for the possession of the Horde of Kazan in 1557, and when the persecutions of the Kirgiz became unbearable.

Ufa was founded about 1573, but an old Tartar town of the same name existed long previously upon this site, the remains of which are still to be seen in the shape of an earthwork now called the Devil's Mound.

The Bashkirs were employed as troops in 1798, protecting the Orenberg frontier.

I forgot to state that the line to Orenberg branches off at Samara. It is completed to the former town and in course of construction to Tashkent. Then another famous tarantass route will have vanished for ever. That characteristic vehicle is disappearing from Russia almost as rapidly as the stage-coach from America. But to return to the Bashkirs. Even here at Ufa, and with these people, one notices the change to the peculiar characteristics of the tribes of Asia. These people are of a decided Mongol type, flat-faced, flat-nosed, broad, and straight. They are Mohammedans, but many read and write Tartar. Like the Kirgiz they inhabit towns of huts in winter, but wander far afield with their herds in summer, when the "kibitkas," or tent of skins, becomes the house until winter drives the people back again to the towns. Modern Ufa is a pretty town of fifty thousand people and possesses

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many schools and churches and two mosques, also some charitable institutions.

Perhaps, as the outer world has rather limited notions as to what Russia does for her people, it would be well to give a list of the institutions of this small city. There are twenty-three churches, two monasteries, one Roman Catholic church, two Mohammedan mosques, twenty-four schools, five with gymnasiums, a geodetic school, a seminary, two clergy schools, a commercial school, a district school, several primary and parish schools, two homes for orphans and waifs, a poorhouse, a free hospital, free lodgings for the poor, an old women's asylum, the Alexander poorhouse for women, an asylum for aged Mohammedans, a free workhouse, a free information bureau for work people, a school for the blind, a division of the Red Cross Society and of the Imperial Humane Society, a society for agriculture, artisans' asylums, a diocesan committee for helping poor clergymen, scientific societies, society of physicians, a committee for public readings, amateur musical and dramatic societies, and a racing society. There are libraries and a museum,—and all these in a town of only fifty thousand people. Can any American city of five times that population show the like? And yet why are these people in the blackness of night? The masses cannot even read. There is more enlightenment, more knowledge, in an American village than in this city of many institutions. Where does the fault lie? What is the reason?

The night descends as we glide off into the limitless spaces of Eastern Russia, and I look out into the

## From Moscow over the Urals 33

shadows, wondering why things are as they are and wherefore are we born.

April 26th.

Grey dawn. The train has a rising sensation, and I know that we have reached the Ural Mountains. It is cold, and too early to get up, but a glimpse from my window shows me long lines of low hills splotched with snow. By nine o'clock we are well among the hills, and later on the chain strongly resembles our Adirondacks, but the panorama is dull and sad — there are so many ghostly birch forests.

To the right we have passed Suleya, near which are some of the most extensive iron mines of the Empire—that of Bahal produces four hundred million pounds. Zalatouse, reached at 11 A.M., is another iron centre. The railway zigzags and circles down the mountains. There are no tunnels now in all its vast length. It crosses the tops of all the hills which come in its way. Eighteen versts east of Zalatouse is Urzhumka, the frontier town. There is a pyramid there with Europe on one side and Asia on the other, and there is passed the summit of the Ural Mountains, never more than hills so far as altitude is concerned. Weary of the interminable steppes of Russia, the earth seems to have sighed itself up into long ridges, only to settle again wearily into the far more interminable steppes of Siberia.

But these expressions of weariness continue for some time longer. We are passing a train of the fifth class just now. I asked the conductor if it was not fourth class, but he replied, "No, fifth; fourth



## 34      The Great Siberian Railway

would have windows." These are freight cars fitted up with wooden bunks and crammed to overflowing with emigrants for Siberia.

As I looked out in the grey of morning to-day, we were passing, as I supposed, one of these trains, but I noticed that the windows were barred and the faces crowding to them shadowed with even more than the usual allotment of sadness observable in Russia,—a prison train, with all that that means in the dominions of the Czar.

Dwarf fir-trees and ghostly birches, snow and rocks against a grey sky, and now a small station in a bowl of these hills. Four men with whom I have been travelling leave the train here and prepare to take a seventy-five mile ride in two tarantasses to some gold mines in which they are interested. One of them, a Frenchman of large size, has never been here before, and is evidently accustomed to no rougher form of travel than Switzerland offers. He has questioned me frequently about my trip in Central Asia, and I have described my tarantass for his benefit. I felt very sorry for him when these vehicles provided for their use here appeared, and I promptly told the conductor of the party that such were only used for luggage in Central Asia, but he replied that Siberia has never had anything better: mere wooden boxes of the crudest description, swung between wheels by two long poles, and drawn by three horses at a wild gallop over these awful roads.

After all, the Ural Mountains would seem to be but the side of a vast plateau, which, together with the steppes of Russia, we have been mounting since

## From Moscow over the Urals 35

we left the Volga. Now every semblance of a mountain has disappeared, and the land stretches away limitless, boundless, covered with dwarfed trees, stunted shrubs, and ponds of ice, over which the setting sun sends long rays of light, cold as charity, into the silence of Siberia.





## CHAPTER VI

### WESTERN SIBERIA AND THE KIRGIZ STEPPE

AT 5 P.M. we stop for an hour at Cheliabinsk, 2669 versts from St. Petersburg, and 7112 from Vladivostok, a town of 18,000 people, and the oldest in this department, is some four versts from the railway station, so we see nothing of it. It was founded in 1658 by the establishment of a fort, and is called after the man upon whose land it was built. Six hundred thousand emigrants have passed through here within a few years. Cheliabinsk may be called the entrance to Siberia, a name signifying to most of mankind the whole of northern Asia. What the name means is still a matter of discussion amongst philologists—but what does it mean to the outer world? What picture is photographed upon the mind's eye when the name is mentioned? Vastness and darkness, horrors of prison, and horrors of cold,—chaos, such as existed before the command, "Let there be light," was uttered by Almighty God. In this long passage from ocean to ocean over the first great achievement of the twentieth century we shall see what this land of legend and story is like, or at least what that small section is like which borders this 6000 miles of railway.

## Western Siberia and Kirgiz Steppe 37

Western Siberia, comprising the governments of Tobolsk and Tomsk, covers some 2,000,000 square versts. Eastern Siberia, Yeniseisk and Irkutsk, and the territory of Yakutsk add some 6,400,000 more, while to this the north-western steppes add 900,000, while the regions of the Amur comprise 2,500,000, the whole representing one-thirteenth of the land of the earth, and being one and one-half as large as all of Europe. This, of course, does not include Trans-Caucasia, Trans-Caspia, and Turkestan, extending from latitude 45° to 77° north, and from longitude 60° east to 190°. Siberia possesses a varied climate, and is so enormous that even the traveller accustomed to the great stretches of America finds it difficult of comprehension. Still the cultivable zone of Eastern Siberia covers but 10,000 square miles. In this are included the Yenisei and Irkutsk governments, exclusive of the Kirensk district. The southern valley of the Yenisei is a favoured spot, and in ancient times was well peopled, as the remains of buildings and stones covered with inscriptions bear witness. To the north of this section is the forest zone, covering 65,000 square miles, and there forestry and agriculture are practised.

Western Siberia has an agricultural zone of 8600 square miles. Bretun states that the real treasure of this northern land is in the rich black earth, and that the whole future prosperity depends thereon.

One of the most impressive sections of this north is the forest zone, dividing the land into sections, and covering 17,000 square miles. Vast, gloomy, and unbroken, these forests stretch away to the north, until, growing thinner and thinner, more and

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more sparse, they dwindle away, finally vanishing into the frozen land, in its turn to give place to the Arctic Ocean. This is the Tundra so graphically described by the Swede in his search for Andrée. Into their black darkness the sunlight never penetrates, and the soil is perpetually frozen. Many of the stories of horror and death which one associates with Siberia are connected with these forests. Lost therein there is no possible hope; the silence is for ever unbroken, save for the sighing of the branches and an occasional howl of a wolf.

The lowlands of West Siberia are absolutely stoneless. In the south-eastern portion the land rises until in the Altai Mountains it reaches a height in the Katunski Stolby of about 12,000 feet. There, there is perpetual snow. The great plateau of the Altai is almost uninhabited. There you find the beautiful Lake Teletsk, said to rival that of Lucerne in beauty, and here the great river Obi has its birth. In the valleys of the rivers hereabout are silver, lead, copper, iron, and gold, in fact, the name "Altai" means gold mountains, so named by the ancients, who were well aware of the hidden riches. Here are also beautiful porphyries and jaspers of many colours and rich beds of coal.

As our train moved out of Cheliabinsk the light grows colder and colder, like that over the face of the dead, and then fades away into darkness, and night settles over the steppes. Presently there is a sobbing and sighing as of lost souls as the wind rises, and then the wavering shadows flee away before a full moon moving majestically heavenward and gazing downward upon this sad country. But

## Western Siberia and Kirgiz Steppe 39

the wind does not last. Siberia is almost a windless land, otherwise the cold of winter would be past endurance.

There is an odd state of affairs as regards time over here. Though Irkutsk is 3400 miles from St. Petersburg, the trains all run on the time of the latter city, therefore arriving in Irkutsk at 5 P.M., when the sun would make it after 9 P.M. The confusion *en route* is amusing; one never knows when to go to bed or when to eat. In an endeavour to follow my instinct yesterday I arrived in the dining-car before the fires were lit, and promptly went back to bed. To-day I should make it now about 8.30,—these clocks say 10.30, and some of these people are eating their luncheon. One cannot but wonder that this state of affairs is permitted, but so it is.

One man is eating iced cake and cheese and boiled eggs. The two former are served only on Easter Sunday, which comes to-day. The cake is called Kulich. There is also an Easter whipped cream called Pascha.

These Russians are very fond of sweets and perfume. The former you can buy in quantities where you cannot purchase the necessaries of life. As for the perfume, they use it constantly and compel you to do the same. As I stood in the door of my compartment just now the porter came along with a large vaporizer and before I knew what he was about had sprayed me all over and I still reek with perfume. This is the first day this has occurred, and perhaps it is an Easter greeting. His amazement was immense when I objected strongly and promptly opened all the windows at my command. In this I was sec-

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onded by a Frenchwoman in the other end of the car, and between us we treated the Russian travellers for five minutes to more fresh air than they have had all winter.

I have just discovered that there is a fine bathroom in the restaurant car, large and tiled, and with all sorts of sprays, plunges, and douches. This bath has its separate attendant and all the bath-towels you may demand.

Our train settles down to work as it leaves Cheliabinsk and pounds along steadily all night long, not forgetting to make frequent and lengthy stoppages, until one wonders whether it will ever move again, and at times the silence is so intense that it awakens me out of a sound sleep,—that sounds exaggerated,—but those who have travelled extensively will understand what I mean.

Morning breaking over the limitless steppes shows a dreary prospect,—a level earth stretching away unbroken to the horizon, save by patches of white birch forest. Drifts of snow cover the dead grass and black mud in streaks, and the sky is sodden. One turns to a book to forget it, yet one cannot banish from the mind thoughts of the thousands of miserables whose lives have passed here in banishment and whose graves form the only hills on the steppes of Siberia.

The Siberian main line, from Cheliabinsk to Stretensk, has a total length of 4865 versts, and is divided into the following sections: the West-Siberian, 1329 versts; the Mid-Siberian, 1715.5 versts; the Irkutsk-Baikal, 64 versts; the Transbaikal, 1035.5 versts, and the Ussuri, 721 versts.

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The total length of the railways connected with the Siberian line and under the control of the Committee is about 6445½ versts, including, besides the main line, the branch lines to the landing-places of the Siberian rivers, traversed by the main trunk, with a length of 19 versts, the branch line to Tomsk, 89 versts, and the Ekaterinburg-Cheliabinsk line, 226 versts.

The branch line of the Manchurian Railway, from Kaidalovo to the Chinese frontier, comprises 3241.3 versts; that from Nikolsk to the Chinese frontier, 110 versts; and that from Perm to Kotlas, 812 versts.

The total cost of these railway works under the control of the committee is 355,377,911 roubles.

In accordance with the desire of the Monarch, this costly Siberian line was constructed exclusively by Russian engineers and with Russian materials.

One reads that during the achievement of this work, the principal attention was paid to the speedy and *solid construction* of the permanent way; the building of stations was to be effected gradually, with a view to economy, and to avoid the risk of useless expenditure, which might result from a false estimate as to the future traffic.

Yet all the world *knows* this road was laid with rail so light as almost to destroy its usefulness. Eighteen pounds to the foot and poorly laid down, so that accidents were frequent and a constant block of the road the usual condition of affairs. But all this will be changed in time. In fact, work is being done to that end already.

Tobolsk lies off to the north. We do not pass near it. A branch line leads there from Omsk,

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which we reach at 8 P.M. to-night. Tobolsk has been the very heart of the convict system, and within the space of seventy-five years one-third of those exiles have settled in that government.

The exile system was introduced in the sixteenth century, and at first as mitigation of the death sentence for persons of high rank only. The "Bell of Uylich," which sounded the alarm on the murder of the Tsarovich Dmitry on May 15, 1591, was one of the first exiles to Tobolsk, but it was only in the beginning of the nineteenth century that the regular exile system began. No statistics could be collected until 1823, when the exile office was established at Tobolsk. The existing documents show that from 1823 to 1898 nearly 700,000 exiles, followed by over 200,000 voluntary companions, passed into Siberia. From 1893 to 1897 50,000 exiles and 30,000 voluntary followers were forwarded, showing an average of 16,000 yearly.

Exiles forwarded of late to Tobolsk are of the following character:

Those condemned for short periods and brought to the Prison of Tobolsk, and after a stage of hard labour sent as settlers in East Siberia.

Those of the upper classes sentenced to loss of all privileges and rights, and exiles for life.

Those of the lower classes banished by court order,—among these are those banished without trial and usually settled in the Tobolsk and Tomsk governments.

While granting lands for temporary use the State retains the right of property over them. All Siberia belongs to the State save the few exceptions such

## Western Siberia and Kirgiz Steppe 43

as town communities, monasteries, or sold to private individuals. Agriculture is the main resource and is carried on as far north as 57°.

Petropavlovsk stands on a high bank above the river Ishun, and holds some 19,000 inhabitants. For tourists it is not interesting, being a counterpart of hundreds of other towns. It originated in a fort named Peter and Paul, which was surrounded by wooden walls and stockades. Being at the junction of the caravan routes it became a place of trade and importance when railroads were not known. A special court was established here. Traffic in human beings was carried on here, in good Kalmyks and other prisoners of war belonging to subject Asiatic races, all Russians of the orthodox religion being granted privilege to buy. This was carried on until 1825.

In this fort, in 1782, the Sultan of the middle Kirgiz Vali Horde swore allegiance to Catherine II. Not until 1807 did the town receive its name.

Stone is largely used in the construction of shops and churches. There are two hundred houses of this material, the rest being of wood, all resembling a well-built log-house, which is just what they are, generally one-storied, with a door in the centre and two windows on each side. The logs are trimmed square and fitted closely together, and then painted,—usually a pink colour.

If you would go by caravan to Bokhara, turn to the Troitsky fort road before reaching Dzhargain,—which is much like that direction to Hawaii: "Go to San Francisco and turn to the left." But if you know those deserts and steppes at all you will not



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try the journey. You would probably get part way and remain just there for ever.

Our train eastward follows the borderland of the great Kirgiz Steppe. This is the very heart of the ancient caravan district, and through here they still pass from sections north, east, and west to which the railway has not as yet penetrated. But their days are numbered, and to what industry will the camels turn themselves when that occurs? We have just passed our first herd of these ships of the steppe and desert, some thirty or more prancing around in the snow, which covers the land as far as the eye can reach and to a foot or more in depth. There are some Kirgiz huts, and the camels and ponies skip away from the passing train like cattle over our plains. They are all evidently having their winter's rest, and the fur of the camel and hair of the ponies is long, luxuriant, and clean,—clean as the camel's fur never is when in service. I must confess that it detracted from the dignity of a double-humped camel to skip around like a two-year-old colt, and a most ludicrous sight these presented. I feel certain that those stately, most magnificent, and gaily caparisoned animals which I met *en route* to Teheran would not be guilty of such a breach of dignity. It would seem that latitude and cold have little to do with these animals, and that they are not, as many suppose, confined within certain latitudes and to warm climates. They are used all over this region and all around Pekin and in Manchuria, where the cold is intense. Last night at Omsk it was fifteen degrees below freezing, yet that is a favourite locality for the camel. One would judge that they

## Western Siberia and Kirgiz Steppe 45

thrive with the Orientals wherever they go, but have nothing in common with the European races, even Russians. You do not find them in Athens, but cross to Asia Minor and there they are, and travel to this far northern region and here they are. Yet I fancy if the Occidentals were to occupy the land the camel would vanish as have our buffalo.

Yonder is Esmarelda and her goat. She is not the dainty creature of Hugo's creation, but a solid, stolid young woman in blue, while the goat is black, has grown old and fat, and long since given over prancing and dancing.

The Mongols in the next car have roosted—I can use no other word—in their compartment like chickens. I have not discovered what they eat or when. If they are like the Russians it is all the time and anything. The latter spend the entire day in the dining-car, and when the train stops for any length of time sample the buffet. To eat constantly seems part of the orthodox religion.

Wearied and depressed with the endlessness of snow and steppe, with the sorrow and sadness of this part of nature, I settle to a book to shut it all out for a season. I open haphazard at the name Katoomba, and instantly the plain of snows is forgotten, and I am once more in the Blue Mountains of Australia. How distinct the picture, how plainly I can see it all! Those rolling hills of the far-off "Never Never Land," clothed in the rustling silvery eucalyptus and shrouded in that pale blue haze which there tells of the dying day. The air is warm and balmy and the katydids have ceased their im-

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patient contradiction, while down by the water some laughing-jackass shrieks with demoniacal merriment, and a kangaroo hops solemnly off into the silence of the bush,—then the moon rises. How vastly different the scene outside the car windows here, yet Siberia is not an unattractive country.

Here is the Kirgiz steppe borderland. All the vast region south of this line, on and over the southern deserts and mountains, is inhabited by the Kirgiz; a region abounding in untold mineral wealth and precious stones, full of rich coal beds, iron ore, and alabaster. Tigers lurk among the reeds of Lake Balkash, the lynx in the Aktan Mountains, wild boar in the south, the ovis (wild sheep) in the Altai Mountains, and, farther south, the two-humped camel (wild), deer, roebuck, gazelle, antelope, wolves, bears, foxes, the marmot, badger, and ermine. These are a few of the animals to be found, while the rivers hold the sturgeon, the sterlet, the nelma, pike, carp, etc.

The population of this steppe borderland are the last representatives of the Turkish Mongol hordes, the terror of Europe in ancient days. They are Mohammedans, and speak a Turkish dialect. All summer long they wander over these vast spaces, living in yurtas (tents of skin), driving their flocks and herds from pasture to pasture, and in winter gathering together and living in huts of wood or turf, half buried in the ground to protect them from the awful cold.

The Kirgiz steppe borderland, containing a population of about a million and a half, possesses an industry the annual product of which scarcely amounts



OUR MONGOL PASSENGER.

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## Western Siberia and Kirgiz Steppe 47

to the value of two million roubles. All the raw materials are exported from this region, where tallow boileries, tanneries, sheepskin, wool-washing and gut-works, occupy an important place on account of their yearly output. The tallow boileries are established near places called "salgany," where the cattle are slaughtered in autumn. They take the form of wooden sheds provided with iron kettles for tallow melting, fitted in hearths placed below the floor close to the wall of the building. Wooden boxes in which the tallow is poured to cool stand in the middle.

This vast borderland is bounded on the east and partly on the south by Western China, and serves as a natural transit road between China and the Russian Empire carrying on trade along the extensive land frontier.

Russia is colonising these steppes by sending her emigrants where she can among the people, and so teaching them the cultivation of the soil, but this was not begun until within the past ten years. Schools and churches have been and are being built, but to change the manners and customs of thousands of years is a difficult matter; and these Kirgiz, looking on in a dull, uninterested way, offering no remonstrance, saying nothing, silently gather their flocks and herds, pack their yurtas, and melt away into the vast expanse around them, taking up the same life that Abraham led, unchanged and unchangeable by the flight of years. Almost as creation's dawn beheld them they wander now, utterly unsuited to the rush and roar of our modern world, happy only when by still waters.

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I can never forget my reception in one of these tents far up in the valley of the Alai Mountains, within the borders of Western China. I was sick, lonely, and very weary, and my horse stopped of its own accord before the humble dwelling, from which two women came out, and immediately helping me to dismount, took me inside. Driving out the goat and baby camel, they spread a small, brilliantly coloured rug in one corner of the tent, and made me lie down. While one gave me water, the other fanned off the flies and heat. No rest ever seemed so perfect, no shadows so cool, no water so refreshing, as in that wretched tent, thrown wide open to me in generous hospitality, and often my thoughts have turned from gorgeous feasts to that crust of bread in the desert.

These people are fond of sports. Hunting and fowling are common amongst them. They hunt the wolves, armed with a short stick only. After a rapid chase the animal is surrounded and then killed by a hard blow on the head or nose, one stroke being sufficient.

You will also find fox-hunting by means of falcons and by hounds.

In the autumn the Kirgiz retire to their huts and settle down for some months, killing part of the cattle for stores, and visiting the winter fairs for barter and sale. The most important fair is that of Botovskaya, from May 25th to June 25th, when four million roubles change hands.

We cross the Irtysh River at Omsk by a fine bridge some twenty-one hundred feet long. Omsk

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has 38,000 inhabitants, and is 3415 versts—about 2500 miles—from St. Petersburg. Its fortress was founded by Peter the Great, and very soon became one of importance, and was rebuilt in 1765. Here the Governor-General of Western Siberia was wedded.

Standing upon a bank the town presents quite an appearance as we approach it, but on examination it is the usual collection of small, one-storied, wooden houses. There are only eighty stone houses in the place, of which one-half belong to the State, and thirty-two to private individuals. The streets are unpaved, the sidewalks of wood, and there is absolutely no vegetation. The fortress has vanished, and its site is now occupied by the government buildings.

Near its ramparts stood formerly a wooden structure,—a penal prison surrounded by high stockades, and, from 1650 on, this was a centre for convict exiles playing an important part in that dark page of Russian history. Toward the end of the eighteenth century over eight hundred convicts were confined here. Dostoevsky speaks of it as a “dead house.” The building has long since passed away.

The most notable building in Omsk now is its cathedral; an immense church, with the usual number of domes and a tall, pointed spire, all coloured and gaudy. The structure is not old, having been begun in 1891.

April 28.

We cross the Ob River by night, near Krivoschekovo, on a fine bridge of steel 2400 feet long. The Ob is the largest river of Western Siberia, and

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seems full of water as we cross it; the water is clogged with fields of ice. Its floods come in part from the glaciers of the Altai Mountains. The main stream has a length of 3200 versts. If considered from the source of the Irtysh, it exceeds 5000 versts, while within the Tomsk Government its breadth is from 350 to 850 sazhens (a sazhen being seven feet). It was the great highway for commerce until the advent of the railway.

The middle section of the railway from the Ob to the Baikal runs through the centre of the Tomsk Government and the most populous part of the Yeniseisk and Irkutsk Governments in Eastern Siberia, and exerts enormous influence over all.

All Northern Asia slopes off to the Arctic Ocean. The Katun Mountains are eleven thousand feet high in the south, and but two hundred feet in the north. Of course the rivers nearly all flow northward. The mountain ranges are many, ranging from four to eleven thousand feet in altitude, while some of them, such as the Bashchalak and Ursul ranges, stand separate and apart,—are uninhabited, and visited only by hunters.

The Katun Stolby is the loftiest of the Altai ranges—eleven thousand feet. Its great glaciers are as large as any in Switzerland.

Enormous forests cover the northern section of the Government of Tomsk.

The fauna of the Tomsk Government, within the limits of the West Siberian plain is very much like that of European Russia. Assuming a great variety of shapes, it is represented on the Altai by both Alpine and Mongolian species. The Altai is in-

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habited by the common bear and a kind of Syrian bear, having long and curly hair of a lighter colour. Besides the lynx and the steppe cat, there are panthers, common and red, or alpine, wolves, common foxes and the "karagan," which is like the steppe fox, but easily known by its black ears, mountain and other skunks. Among the hoofed animals, besides the common elk, the reindeer, and the mountain sheep, there are the Altai black goat, "tak-teke," Siberian roebuck, the maral, muskdeer, pishchukha, and marmot.

"Our country affords shelter to all," says Professor Kashchenko, "we are here living in a time which in Europe has long since passed away. Central Europe, with respect to its fauna, held a similar position about two thousand years ago, at the time of Julius Cæsar, and the central zone of Russia, eight hundred years ago, at the time of Vladimir Monomakh. At present, however, evolution is more rapid, and the time is drawing nigh when the primitive but rich condition of our country, which now seems to the stranger to belong to far distant days, will in fact exist no more. Special attention must be given to this rapid transition from past to present, which is now going on, in order that it may not deprive us of the many advantages of our wild nature, possessing a charm of her own. All her living creatures should be carefully preserved, not only because they are useful, but also because they adorn nature equally with ourselves."



## CHAPTER VII

### THE TOMSK GOVERNMENT

THE Tomsk Government is the most populous of all in Siberia, having, in 1897, 1,929,092, showing an increase in seven years of over 600,000 in number. After the native tribes the Poles come first, followed by Jews, Finns, and Germans. The increase in population came from natural growth, immigration, and free settlers from Russia. The exiles are allotted to the northern sections far from the railroad, though some are admitted to the Altai mining district. Within the last ten years over seventeen thousand exiles, including those who went voluntarily, were settled in three northern districts. During the years from 1890 to 1900 the rush of settlers to the Crown lands—mining—in the Altai section amounted to over three hundred thousand. It is claimed that the railway has already exerted a marked influence in the increase of immigration and it is but just opened; in fact, only the section to Irkutsk is entirely completed.

The Imperial founder of the Siberian Railway—so states the official guide—attached special importance to the settlement of the regions traversed by it, re-

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garding emigration as a factor which in Russian history had always tended to secure Russian dominion and Russian culture, and would serve as a stronghold of orthodoxy and Russian law in Siberia.

According to the plan of the late Emperor, Nicholas II. expressed the desire to give a more conscious and regular character to the emigration movement, and to prevent such emigration from injuriously affecting the economic condition of the settlers. For this purpose the Committee made all sorts of arrangements to harmonise with the former life of the peasants at home, meeting their needs on the road, and facilitating their settlement in the new locality.

To ascertain the prospects offered by emigration to Siberia, and to avoid false information, villagers who intend to emigrate have the right to send a pioneer previously to examine the places of future settlement. These men, travelling at a reduced fare and subsidised with grants of money, are allowed the right to choose land for the families left behind, as being better able than any one else to form exact notions as regards colonisation in Siberia. Short but exact descriptions of Siberia, including the general regulations for peasant emigration, are spread among the population with the same object. Special land-surveying parties, sent by the Ministry of Agriculture and State Domains to assist the settlers, are entrusted with the exploration of the cultivable areas fit for colonisation, traversed by the Great Siberian Railway, and with the surveying of the lands allotted to the emigrants.

Farther on we read that the interests of the

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indigenous nomad population, the Kirgiz, have been taken into consideration during the colonisation of the steppe regions; detailed investigations of the natural history and statistics of the Akmolinsk, Semipalatinsk, and partly of the Turgai steppes, have been made with a view to determining the extent of the districts occupied by the nomads, and of the free lands which might be allotted to emigrants without damage to the aborigines. In arranging the allotments for settlers, care was taken that they might include land suitable for cultivation and be sufficiently provided with water. Since the first organisation of these survey and allotment parties, including the work done in 1898, 5,744,000 desiatins have been assigned for accommodation of settlers along the Siberian Railway, of which 4,308,000 are already occupied.

The land statistics give about five million surplus desiatins of Kirgiz land in the Akmolinsk territory, which are to be partly colonised. The unfavourable hydrographic conditions of the Ishim and Baraba steppes traversed by the railway, within the confines of the Akmolinsk territory and the Tobolsk and Tomsk Governments, necessitate the organisation of an irrigation system for these localities.

The hydrotechnical parties sent by the Ministry of Agriculture and State Domains have undertaken the regulation of the scantily watered emigrant lands in the Ishim steppe, and the drainage of the swampy Baraba steppe.

Putting a land-fund at the disposal of the settlers, the Committee at the same time has taken measures to provide them with the due authorisation and to

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supply them with grants of money for travelling expenses. It has further organised medical and feeding stations along the road. Every emigrant suffering from an infectious disease is detained at Cheliabinsk, the starting-point of the Siberian Railroad. The medical and feeding stations are organised at those points of the railway where the emigrants leave the train and continue their journey with horses. At these stations, they get gratuitous medical assistance and hot food at very low rates. Loans of money for the installation of the household, seed-corn, and timber for house-building are also allotted to settlers. Special stores of necessary household furniture and of timber, obtainable by the settlers at low prices or, instead of money loans, are organised at places where forests are scarce and the supply of wood attended with difficulty.

The Siberian Railway plays a part of the first importance in the creation of churches and schools. The stations, although situated at a considerable distance from existing churches, become fresh centres of population. Further, at stations distinguished by a large traffic, are concentrated considerable numbers of railway officials, while some stations have become centres of the emigration movement, whence emigrants start for the inspection or definite settlement of the localities indicated for the purpose.

The official guide tells us that in making the vast outlay of several hundred million roubles for the construction of the railway, the Government did not expect in the near future to get a strictly commercial return. Its profit was based on numerous elements of increase in the national economy, conjectural and

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incapable of arithmetical calculation, connected with the commercial and industrial development of the country.

The railway exercised, however, such a mighty influence on the growth of economic life in Siberia that its commercial success far exceeds the most extravagant expectations.

Upon the opening of provisional traffic on the West Siberian Railway in 1895, and of regular traffic in October, 1896, the means at its disposal were far from sufficing for the transport and conveyance of the passengers and goods which presented themselves. In order to obviate this difficulty, thirty-one sidings were added in 1896-97-98 to facilitate the traffic, while the rolling stock was increased by thirty locomotives and six hundred carriages. However, during the winter of 1899, seven thousand wagons carrying over five million puds of goods blocked the line.

The following figures illustrate the increase of passenger and goods traffic:

The West Siberian Railway conveyed: in 1896, 160,000 passengers, 169,000 emigrants, and 10,500,000 puds of various goods; in 1897, 236,000 passengers, 78,000 emigrants, and 21,190,000 puds of goods; in 1898, 379,000 passengers, 195,000 emigrants, and 30,000,000 puds of goods.

The Mid-Siberian Railway conveyed: in 1897, 177,000 passengers, and 5,393,000 puds of goods; in 1898, 476,000 passengers and 11,000,000 puds of goods.

On the West Siberian Railway, which was first opened, the passenger traffic increased by fifty per cent. and the goods traffic by still more.

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Further progress in the development of the traffic of the Siberian Railway is certain, especially upon the junction of the main line with the port on the Pacific Ocean, when there will be continuous railway communication between Europe and the east of Asia, and there will be created the safest, quickest, cheapest, and most convenient route. Brought into connection with the network of European railways, and running through the Russian Empire for a distance of about ten thousand versts, the Siberian Railway mostly traverses cultivated and productive countries, uniting their commercial centres and offering new outlets and prospects for Russian and international intercourse and trade. It must be mentioned that China, Japan, and Korea, comprising a total population of about 460,000,000 souls, and having a foreign trade to the amount of 500,000,-000 R. gold, are yet far from having fully developed their commerce with Europe. Upon the completion of the Manchurian railway, they will be able to take a greater share in the international market, thanks to the Siberian Railway, constituting a most important factor in the further development of trade.

At the present time, Europe communicates with Asia *via* the Suez Canal by means of four great steamship companies: the Peninsular and Oriental, the Messageries Maritimes, and the German and Austrian Lloyds; and the lesser companies: the Russian Steamship and Trading Co. and the Volunteer Fleet. They all work well, but do not suffice to meet the demand for transport, so that it is necessary to apply in good time in the case of both passengers and goods.

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Considering Moscow as the centre of Russia, and London and Shanghai as the termini for foreign trade, it appears that the voyage from Moscow, *via* Odessa, to Vladivostok, requires not less than forty days, and costs 600 R. for first-class cabin passengers, and 450 R. for second-class passengers, while the passage from London to Shanghai requires from thirty-four to thirty-six days, and costs from 650 R. to 900 R.

The guide is certainly wrong in the following statement—at least at present:

"The journey from Moscow to Vladivostok or Port Arthur, comprising a distance of about 8000 versts, at the rate of 30 versts an hour and with the existing tariff, will take ten days, and cost 114 R. first class, by fast train, inclusive of government tax and sleeping accommodation; 74 R. second class, and 51 R. third class, by post train. Without sleeping car, the fares are 89 R., 56 R., and 36 R."

I paid 111 R. from Petersburg to Irkutsk only.

According to their calculation, the journey from London to Shanghai includes: three days from London to Moscow, cost 125 R., ten days from Moscow to Vladivostok, cost 114 R., three days from Vladivostok to Shanghai, cost 80 R., or a total of sixteen days and 319 R. The journey second class costs 200 R., third class—about 130 R.

Arrangements for a more extensive organisation were deemed most necessary by the Committee to meet the interests of the public and, in view of the unexpected commercial success of the Siberian Railway which, as is estimated, upon its completion will have an annual revenue of about 8,000,000 R.

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Even this amount will in time be exceeded, and 16,000,000 R. will not be too high a figure, if we include all the indirect benefits which may be expected by the Government.

The estimated cost of these additional facilities required for the Siberian Railway, from Cheliabinsk to the station Kaidalovo (united by a branch line with the Manchurian railway), is 91,316,791 R., inclusive of the expenditure for the increase of the capacity for through traffic and conveyance, the introduction of a higher speed, the replacement of the light by heavy rails, and the improvement of the roadway.

The rapid increase in the profits of the Siberian Railway, connected with the general economic growth of Siberia, strikingly illustrates the effect produced upon civilisation and commerce by this great work, which will serve as a monument to the reign of the Tsar and to the Russian Slavonic nation, which is destined to propagate Christianity and civilisation in the East of Asia. We may not approve entirely of her methods, but she can accomplish more and in less time than any other nation.





## CHAPTER VIII

### LIFE ON THE RAILWAY

HUNTING and trapping are passing away in Siberia as the land becomes populated. Still there is much of it done, and the squirrel, kolonka, sable, fox, ermine, bear, otter, and wild duck, swan, geese, and hazel hen, are killed in large quantities every year. Over 100,000 squirrels, 1500 sables, and 500 ermines are killed annually in the Kuzultsk district alone, where 2000 people are so engaged. Such is the record. A hunter sometimes gets 300 ducks in one night. In the Nary region they gather in the lakes—before immigration begins—in great flocks and fly from one lake to the other. The hunters make a clearing between two lakes, across which a net is stretched. The ducks frightened from one lake fly by the clearing to the other, become entangled in the nets, from which they are removed and then killed by biting through the back of the head.

The domestic industries seem to be the manufacture of wooden articles, axles, wheels, boots of felt, pottery, and dressing of skins. There are distilleries and breweries and flour mills and soda works. While in St. Petersburg I visited the exposition of the peas-

ants. It was extensive, comprising about everything they could use, but all very crude, and all hand work. Some of the linen work by the women was well done and very cheap, and of course the carpets from Central Asia were good, but the best of those go to the merchants of the great cities. Those exhibited were such as the poorer classes would use.

Pausing at one of the carpet exhibits I questioned the men as to where they were from. They looked very lonely and homesick and I have no doubt missed the sociability of those Sart cafés to be found at every corner in every town of Central Asia. Those salons of the Orient, shaped like great square trundle-beds, covered with a bright carpet, a samovar steaming in a lively fashion, with a great pile of teacups piled around it, occupying the post of honour, while some dozen or so of turbaned Sarts, sitting in solemn silence, discuss the long pipe passed by the attendant boy. Camels wait around the corner, and gossip and grumble amongst themselves, and patient donkeys doze in the intense sunlight.

There in Russia it was cold, dark, and rainy, and these men took little interest in the fair. I asked if they came from Merv? No. From Bokhara? No. From Samarkand? No, and still no flicker of interest in me or my questions, but when I struck Kokand, Jesak, and Marghelan, they watched me curiously to see if I would guess correctly. Finally, when I mentioned Tashkent it was very evident that I had succeeded. How they did gabble and chatter! I could not, of course, understand one word, but that made no difference. Sign language is universal, and I had been in their home. It was difficult to

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get away, and the last I saw of them they were standing on rolls of carpet for a last look.

There are great fairs in this Tomsk section whose business amounts yearly to seven million roubles.

I have examined with much interest the little booths to be found at many of the railway stations. Those in the Urals displayed fancy designs in iron, malachite, and lapis lazuli. There were also many stones scarcely regarded as precious,—among them several very beautiful amethysts: one, as large as an English walnut and of a beautiful colour, cost but thirty roubles, about fifteen dollars. There were stones of pale green and blue shades and some of pink. A gentleman in this car has a paper full of the finer gems; amongst them was a ruby as large as a pea and of beautiful colour, also sapphires and diamonds, though of what value these may have been I could not judge and did not like to ask.

At the present time the gold-mining industry of Siberia, yielding gold to the value of twenty million roubles, comprises a vast area. Gold is obtained in the Ob, Yenisei, Lena, and Amur basins, and throughout all the governments of this enormously rich country. All the gold-bearing regions of the Ob, Yenisei, and Lena are situated in the basins of rivers flowing from the east, viz., from the western slopes, falling gradually to the North Siberian plain, of the mountain ridges bounding the basin of the Arctic Ocean on the south.

The thickness and the width of the gold strata vary greatly. In Siberia auriferous quartz is found in the Yeniseisk Government, on the Altai, in connection with silver in the Zyrianov and Riddersk

mines, and in the Trans-Baikal region. Several beds of gold ore have been discovered more lately in the Marinsk district of the Tomsk Government.

According to the data obtained it appears that, with few exceptions, gold is at present obtained in Siberia by washing machines of very primitive construction, the gold-bearing regions are but imperfectly exploited, and the mines insufficiently worked, while two-thirds of them are entirely undeveloped for want of capital and workmen. Some technical improvements in the working of gold mines are being adopted now at a few places; thus, for example, in the Lensk district gold is washed in winter with warm water; in the Amur territory dredging machines are employed, and the work time is extended by washing the ore in the night by electric light. The resolution of the Committee of Ministers sanctioned by the Emperor in 1898, permitting during ten years (till the 1st of January, 1909) the free import of foreign machinery and appliances required for the mining industry in Siberia and the Ural, will surely, in the near future, contribute to the development of a more regular exploitation and of a greater production of gold by enlarging the districts worked, and getting a greater quantity of gold from existing fields.

The greater part of Siberia's mineral wealth is as yet lying waste, and is even scarcely known; the results of the extensive and varied investigations carried out within the range of the railway will undoubtedly attract promoters who, on the basis of the existing information, will find application for their capital and labour, and duly develop many

## 64      The Great Siberian Railway

branches of the mining industry, for which Siberia offers the most advantageous conditions.

The Mid-Siberian Railway extends from the Ob River to Irkutsk, a length of 1715 versts (over 1200 miles), built and equipped at a cost of 108,036,641 roubles. To Krasnoyarsk the cost was about \$25,-000 per mile, and thence to Irkutsk over \$36,000 per mile.

The city of Tomsk is situated on a branch line, eighty-two versts north of the main road, on a river of the same name. It is the largest town in Siberia, having fifty-two thousand inhabitants. Like all Siberian towns it can be seen in a very short space of time, unless you are interested in an inspection of hospitals and other institutions. With the usual plan,—*i. e.*, streets at right angles,—it has one square in which is located its university. Tomsk was founded by Tsar Boris Godunov, early in the seventeenth century, with a stockaded fort, that being a locality resorted to by the wandering tribes of Asia.

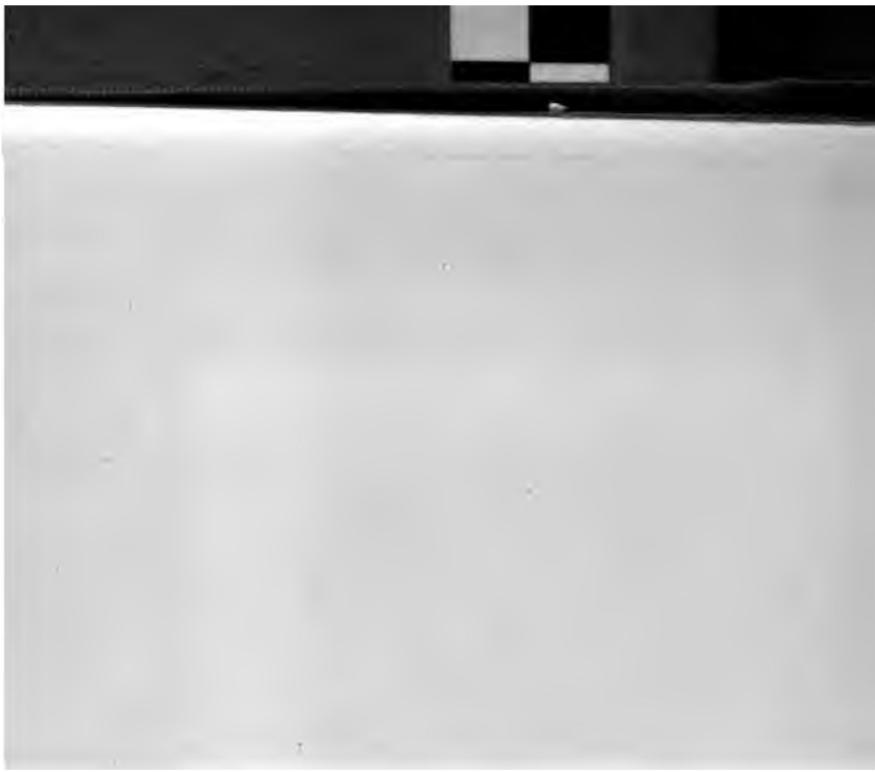
The unhappy bride of Peter II., Catherine Dolgoruky, was imprisoned here in a nunnery, which has ceased to exist. She was liberated by Elizabeth when that Princess ascended the throne. That seems to be the only historical event connected with this place.

There are some handsome churches and a fine theatre, and the town is well paved, for Russia,—in those horrible cobble-stones. But, as I have stated, there is nothing to interest. All is very new and just what it should be for the comfort of these people, except the weather. The winters are frightfully



A TYPICAL SIBERIAN RAILWAY STATION.

U.S.  
30



## Life on the Railway

65

cold, and the ice does not break in the river until our May 15th.

April 29.

All day long at a dog trot—certainly not more than ten miles an hour. The country continues perfectly flat, and is sparsely covered with birch forests, but fully covered with snow,—apparently it is mid-winter, though it is not cold. But two days more of this first section. The time has passed quickly on the whole, and I have been very comfortable. The train was crowded as we left Moscow, but now there are but six in this car, and as many more in each of the others. To get left at one of the stations would be very like being dropped overboard at sea, and as the passengers leave us to our solitary way we feel as one does when the pilot departs, leaving one's ship to the ocean. Our fat conductor has just put his head into my stateroom—it would be difficult to get more of him therein—and inquired if Monsieur is lonely, adding that it is a very sad country. Yea, verily. So others have found it who have come by invitation of the Great White Tsar, but whose "invitation" made no mention of a return. I should fancy that the vastness and solitude of the land soon so impressed those unfortunates that they must have become sodden with indifference and hopelessness, gradually ceasing to care for themselves or those left behind, and almost forgetting to long for the bliss of death.

However, it is not just to Russia to judge of her prisons from our standpoint. The majority of her people have never in their lives lived so luxuriously

## 66      The Great Siberian Railway

as they would do in our prisons, never had such comfortable clothes to wear, never slept on such beds, or eaten such food. They are no worse off in most of these prisons than they are in their own wretched hovels. The accounts which so horrify us in such books as the *Resurrection* would not horrify a Russian at all, as the state of affairs therein described is what these people are accustomed to at home. To one of our people such things would be torture, but here they have known little, if anything, better. You cannot have the slightest appreciation of the filth and degradation of these peasants unless you come here. The higher-class Russians are a race that spend millions on pleasure and splendour, but are strangers to the absolute comforts of life. Go into one of their palaces in Petersburg, and after being amazed at the gorgeousness and charmed with the feast spread before you, ask to see the servants' quarters. Generally you will find that there are none. They sleep all around the halls and passages as in India. A gentleman informed me lately that he had been told, upon asking, that the head man-servant had a pillow, that was all, and he was considered well provided for.

Russia is a hundred years behind the rest of Europe in about everything one can mention, and she is in no hurry to change her state, being far from convinced that we have discovered the better methods. Her capital has no sewage system. Under the Nevsky Prospect, its greatest street, there are some logs laid down, which, getting clogged, must be torn up constantly.

As I have stated before, these people go to the

bath-house every week, but wear the same clothing for months on months, and in case of furs they last for years, continually more and more soaked in grease and filth of all sorts.

When the railway was built from Petersburg to Moscow, Nicholas I. was asked what towns it was to pass through. Taking a ruler, he drew a straight line between St. Petersburg and Moscow, and so that line was built. Such would seem to have been the case in the building of this Siberian Railway. Every town of any size has been avoided until Irkutsk is reached, and even there the road does not enter the city. Omsk and Tomsk are off the line, which apparently might easily have been carried through both.

All day long it snows, and we jog onward, having lost all but half a dozen passengers. I am weary of reading, weary of gazing off upon the eternal snows, the vast expanses of nothingness which stretch around the crawling train, and therefore join the remnant of our passengers in the dining-car.

While the Russians eat, the wife of the French Consul plays the piano, mostly softly sounding waltzes, which bring to the mind's eye far different scenes from this. Even the fat conductor, with his delicate pink silk handkerchief loaded with perfume, has joined us, and we are not altogether lacking in appreciation of the compliment. The little Jew and his bride are secluded in their compartment.

The fat conductor is a spiritualist, it seems, and has been told that he must die within ten years. He also has had communications with the late Minister of the Interior, murdered in Petersburg the other

## 68      The Great Siberian Railway

day, who told him that his last impressions of earth were of the eyes of the man who killed him. The fat conductor, reminding one, as to his size and shape, of Count Fosco in Wilkie Collins's immortal book, has drawn some cabalistic signs on a piece of paper, and over this, by means of the electric current between the hands of two people, an inverted saucer is caused to travel—in fact, a rude imitation of the heart-shaped planchette of years ago. The fat conductor affirms that he has received many most important communications from the spirit land by this medium; that many royal personages have paid him visits by appointment during the night. I am not surprised when he mentions Elizabeth of England, but I object most positively when the beautiful Queen of Scotland is said to have descended to his dirty stateroom in this overland train of Siberia and held a midnight *séance* with the fat, much-perfumed conductor thereof. The war of words rages violently, and mostly in the two languages uncomprehended by the disputants. French and German, by means of which we might have settled the dispute, we let severely alone, and when I finally retire from the conflict and seek my stateroom I am followed by indignant glances. That I should have doubted the fascination of said fat conductor is something that will not be easily forgotten.

We have just passed one of the "International" trains. Certainly there was no comparison between it and the one I am on—the Russian train. The staterooms are larger, better furnished, each with a lounge, arm-chair, and writing-table with a shaded lamp; each possesses also a toilet-room. The whole

train is carpeted. We have nothing so luxurious at home. The dining-car is large and has attendants who speak English, German, French, and Russian. There are large bath-rooms, marble paved, with porcelain tub and containing every appliance to be found in a private house—such, in fact, as few Continental houses possess. To have gotten on one of those trains I should have had to wait a month, which I could not do.

In addition, those trains serve a *table d'hôte* breakfast at eleven, and dinner in the evening, so that there is no danger of being stranded for food because you cannot speak other languages than English. That comes very near happening on these Russian trains, where sign language absolutely fails. The stupidity of a Russian waiter is unsurpassed. Last night I could not make mine understand that I wanted a spoon for my soup. One gesture would have sufficed for an American darkey, or a waiter in Europe, even if it is supposable that he forgot the spoon, which he scarcely would do. I had to get it myself in this case, and the same thing happened about a spoon for my eggs this morning.

However, I have been very comfortable where I am. The traveller must make up his mind that from the Russian railway authorities he will obtain no information about those trains. I was assured by the agent in Petersburg that there was "no difference," whereas the second-class on those trains is better than the first on these, and the difference between the trains as a whole is immense. Those trains are called the "International Trains of the Wagonlits Company." These—the Russian trains

## 70      The Great Siberian Railway

—bear the difference in mind, and secure your quarters weeks before you expect to start.

*En route* I have held much converse with the director of some gold mines, who told me that his work is made many times more difficult than there is any necessity for by the dense stupidity of these people. Once telling does not do. They must be told every day and hour. They look at you with the blank, stupid expression of a sheep, and understand nothing. I think I can truthfully say that in all the vast distance from Baku to Petersburg, and Petersburg to Irkutsk, I have not seen a ghost of a smile on the face of man, woman, or child, much less a laugh. They gather around the platform in dead silence, saying nothing to each other, and rarely approaching you, unless it be some boy who will beg, if he can do so unseen by the Cossacks.

To a casual observer it must appear that this Siberian Railway is a costly toy with small chances of proving a paying investment for many years to come, but I believe the reverse holds. Our train on leaving Moscow was crowded, but most of the passengers have gotten out long since, few remaining after we had entered Siberia; certainly there are not twenty people in the whole train at present. The authorities take no pains to reserve the train for through passengers, but sell out to the first comers, even though their destination is but twenty-four hours out. This keeps many through travellers at home for weeks, and ensures empty trains all through the long route. The return "International," which we passed yesterday, held about six

passengers. We have passed an "ordinary" each day with the third-class full, but first and second empty. As for the freights, "goods-trains" as they call them, they are few and far between. There is absolutely no local travel. No one has entered this train since we left Moscow, and we are now within eight hours of Irkutsk. Leaving Moscow at 10 P.M. on Wednesday we shall, by the same time, arrive in Irkutsk Thursday at 8 P.M.—or 1 A.M. Friday, Irkutsk time.

Aside from the bridges there is no costly or difficult work in all the thirty-four hundred miles from Petersburg, nor in all the vast Russian Empire have railroad constructors had difficult work to do. The Ural Mountains—long, easy billows of land—offer no obstruction on this route, and that, all the way to Irkutsk, is the only hilly section worth calling such. On all the rest from the very station at Petersburg the rails have been easily laid on almost a dead level. It remains to be seen what sort of work these people have done beyond the Baikal. As for the interest of this route to ordinary tourists, so far it is of the lowest order. It was somewhat picturesque in the Urals, and for me the steppes possess a decided fascination, but for most people the monotony would be appalling. For three days past we have jogged along between scraggly birch forests, shutting in the prospect save here and there.

This morning a variation occurs and we have pine forests. You who object to the journey from Richmond to Palm Beach because of its monotony should come here, or rather should never come here, where you would find monotony worse confounded,

## 72      The Great Siberian Railway

in a distance greater than from New York to San Francisco. Personally I have enjoyed the trip, being an old traveller and always greatly interested in new countries; but, so far, I should not care to repeat it for many years, which with any other nation save Russia would mean a vast change, but I fancy a century hence will see little change in Siberia. To my thinking nothing can help this country save an absolute throwing open of her portals, a thing impossible to the Russian Government.





## CHAPTER IX

### THE YENISEISK GOVERNMENT

April 30.

We pass Krasnoyarsk in the early morning. It is the chief town of the Yeniseisk Government, situated on the left bank of the Yenisei River, and has twenty-six thousand inhabitants. In the centre is a large garden called the finest in Siberia—at present covered with snow. The town itself is an exact counterpart of all the others: some fine stone houses, and all the rest of wood, square and low, bordering very wide streets. There is a new cathedral with many gilded domes. Like all other Russian towns Krasnoyarsk is crowded with charitable institutions, and those of education and agriculture,—many more than a place of its size would justify,—but the institutions for each district are centred in one spot. We find here ten charitable and medical establishments alone. There are twenty-six educational institutions, and the most important agricultural society in Siberia. There are a museum, and libraries for rich and poor, but certainly, as the lower classes cannot read, it is only the middle class that can be benefited thereby. There are several

## 74      The Great Siberian Railway

papers and periodicals, all subject to the censorship. The Russia Hotel is the best in the town, though there are several others.

Just after leaving the town we cross one of Siberia's greatest rivers—the Yenisei. It received its name from Tungus "Ioanesi," meaning "wide water." It takes its rise in Mongolia, is very rapid until it reaches Minusinsk, and is often a mile and a half wide. From source to gulf it is about twenty-four hundred miles in length. The ice king holds it solid as we cross. Spring has not shown itself here as yet. The railway bridge, a fine structure of steel, is some three thousand feet long. The separate spans were framed on the banks, and by means of capstans launched into position over rollers, the framing of the ironwork being carried out with the help of a special rolling crane.

In the afternoon of our last day, towards Irkutsk the country becomes more hilly, but there are no views. We are still enclosed in the ghastly grasp of the birch forests.

On this journey, as indeed all over Russia, one is impressed with the waste of time caused by the long stoppages, none less than fifteen minutes, and sometimes an hour. I have failed to discover the cause. Yesterday, for instance, and all during last night, we met but two or three trains, yet we wasted certainly two hours in all. The time might be very greatly shortened. In Russia proper between Baku and Moscow several hours could be taken off the schedule. Our progress is so slow here that the distance traversed does not impress one as being so great as that between New York and San Francisco, where

## The Yeniseisk Government 75

half the time is consumed *en route*. This road is not laid with heavy rails, and such speed as is attained in Europe would strain the track, but a very fair speed is attained at times, though never kept up, and that, together with the long stops, runs up the time. As I have said, it is the same all over the Empire.

The evening of our last day finds us on a high, cold plateau, treeless and barren, and brings us to the only town we have reached for two days past with any signs of life,—a scattered hamlet of wooden houses, with one green-domed church, which just now flings outward a jangled sound of bells. The place is evidently a coal district and the crowd of peasants at the station all miners.

Night has come down and Irkutsk is but four hours away. The first section of the journey is nearly over. Eight days and four hours from Moscow. Midnight finds me at the Hotel Metropole in Irkutsk, where I am at once reminded that manners and customs have changed, by being asked whether I want bed-clothing.

The reaction from nine days' confinement in the train has set in, and I am too weary to sit up, yet in no state to go to sleep. However, it must be tried, as it is 2 A.M., and so I drift into a troubled dream-land, dreaming of my late journey for pleasure, and of the sad ones who have come here at the bidding of the Tsar.

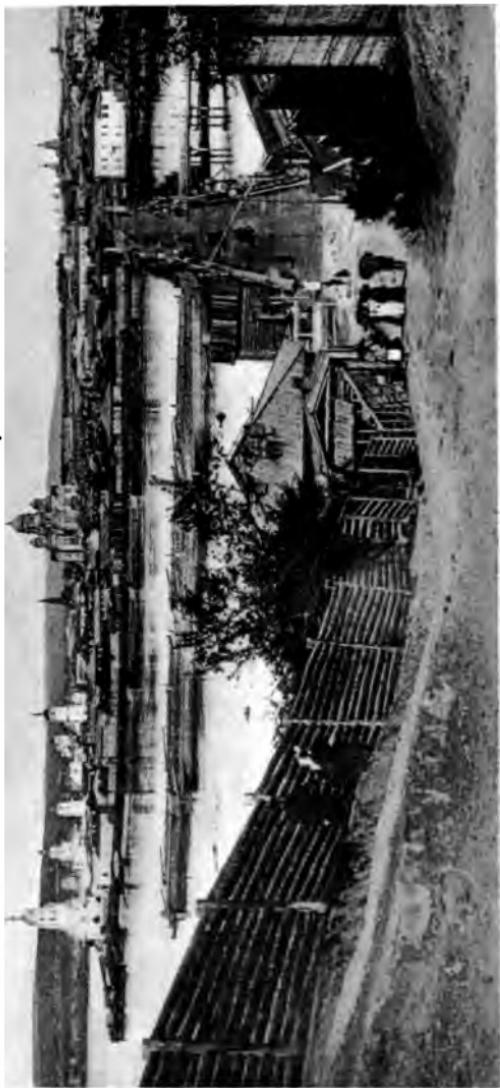
IRKUTSK, Friday, May 2, 1902.

A brilliant sunlight flooding downward from a blue sky assures me a pleasant first day in this far-eastern capital. My first impression of the town—

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from my balcony—is that of a sizable, low-lying village, surrounded on the south by hills of no great height, crowned here and there by the inevitable green-domed white church. Long, wide streets bordered by low, one-storied, wooden houses, with here and there a brick one rising to two stories, while every roof is green. In the street below, some officers are strolling, and a few rickety droskys stand around. Evidently they have been banished by degrees from Petersburg to Moscow, and so on through Samara and Cheliabinsk, until what is left of them is displayed below for hire, though I should fancy it would be difficult to awaken those sleepy drivers. The usual brisk life of a town on a bright spring day is, as is always the case in Russia, lacking. There is not a child or dog in sight, and as for cats I have scarce seen one in all Russia, but the ubiquitous sparrows are over all the Empire by the millions. I believe it is said that they occupy all the earth, save alone the Pacific Islands.

Irkutsk lies on the right bank of the Angara, opposite the mouth of the Irkut. It is the capital of Eastern Siberia. In the early portion of the last century it was the capital of the whole of Siberia. About 1822 the province was divided, and Tomsk became the capital of the western half. In population Irkutsk yields to Tomsk only, having some fifty-one thousand inhabitants. It is considered one of the best built and best laid-out towns of the country, but for one of its age it is very crude in appearance. Founded in 1652, it is just two hundred and fifty years old, and when one looks abroad over its



CITY OF IRKUTSK.

2



## The Yeniseisk Government 77

muddy, unpaved streets, squalid wooden houses, and general newness of appearance, one realises how slowly things move in Siberia. Its main street is paved over portions of its length, and lined with two-story stores. The railway has proven the awakening of Irkutsk. Five hundred buildings in brick and stone have been erected within the past eighteen months, which space of time shows greater life and movement than all the other two hundred and forty-eight and a half years put together. It is scarcely fair to judge of the life of the town now, as this is the holiday season, when every shop has been closed for ten days. This must prove a great expense to the smaller merchants.

In endeavouring to make some necessary purchase to-day for our further journey we found it necessary to bombard the rear of several stores, and only got what we wanted because of our departure to-night.

The cathedral of Irkutsk is a pretentious building of stone with five domes and a campanile, but I cannot say that it is a pleasing structure. Many of the other churches, though gaudy in interior decoration, are fantastic and interesting in outward appearance, and are brilliant with colour, which the greater church lacks.

Irkutsk is without a debt, but one is being arranged for in order that the streets may be paved and general improvements undertaken. As matters stand now it is almost impossible to face the dust which fairly darkens the sun on a windy day.

Even Russia cannot sadden past hope a woman so that she loses all love of the beautiful, and it is pathetic to observe here during the Easter season

## 78      The Great Siberian Railway

that almost every window contains blossoming plants backed, where such a luxury can be afforded, by a white curtain.

I join forces here with some English friends and the French Consul and his wife, and all go forward to-night, or rather to-morrow morning at two. It is a matter of grave doubt whether we can cross the Baikal, or rather whether the ice-breaker can force its way through. If not, it will go as far as it can, and we shall be transferred to sledges for the remainder of the passage, provided the ice is considered safe. If not, we return to the western shore.

If reports be correct,—and as they come from the best people of the place I have no doubt that they are so,—the worst of our wild Western towns, a score of years ago, were safe abiding-places in comparison to Irkutsk. The police here seem to amount to nothing at all, and to be of the most corrupt order. A gentleman of the town tells me that he was robbed here some weeks since, and upon reporting it to the police was told that if he desired the matter investigated he must pay fifteen roubles to begin with, and much more to follow. There is an average of a murder a day every year, and last fall the assassinations amounted to two hundred and forty in one month.

The worst of the convict element overflows into this section with these dreadful results as a consequence. Surely this would go to prove that it would be better to shut criminals up for ever than to allow the tainting of a whole district.

In our own case in Irkutsk we were warned not to go out alone at night, and never, even in company,



CATHEDRAL OF IRKUTSK.

UNI  
2



## The Yeniseisk Government 79

into the side streets, so that the quiet strolls so dear to a traveller became an impossibility. When we came to the station, a lady of our party said to her husband: "I will wait here in the carriage with the small things while you look after the luggage," but a police officer in attendance—we were never without one—replied: "No, Madame, you must at once enter the waiting-room. It would be very unsafe to remain here. If these people desired—and they would so desire—to rob you they would not hesitate to murder you."

While in the station we had the Chief of Police and four men with us all the time.

That sojourn in Irkutsk marks the only instance up to date in all the dominions of Russia when I have not felt absolutely safe, but I discovered later that a like state of affairs exists to the eastward. An American may chafe at the constant surveillance, but he soon begins to realise how necessary it is, and to know that he could not possibly vanish; he would be missed promptly and easily traced by his passport, which is recorded wherever he stops. I was surprised at Irkutsk when, on presenting mine to the landlord of the hotel, which, by the way, is a very dirty establishment, he informed me that it was not necessary, but I insisted for the sake of the record that it should be done, and it was done. In less than an hour a man came to my room and told me that he knew my name, that I had a letter of credit on such a bank, and told me the correct amount, which, though not a large sum for Europe or America, would be wealth to many here. He claimed to come from the bank; but I did not

believe it, as his actions were queer, to say the least, and I could scarcely get rid of him. At that time I had heard nothing of the evil conditions of the town. It is useless to state that his invitations to "go out for a walk" I did not accept.

The class of exiles, playing an important part among the population of Eastern Siberia, comprise the following divisions: (1) convicts; (2) exile-settlers deprived of all civil rights; (3) persons banished for a certain period, deprived of all personal and civil rights; (4) exiled by the administration without trial. From 950 to 1000 convicts are annually forwarded by the Tiumen exile board to Eastern Siberia, to the penal settlements of the Irkutsk Government, where they are kept in the Alexander Central Prison, in the Nicholas Iron Works, and in the salterns of Irkutsk and Ust-Kutsk. The daily contingent of hard-labour convicts varies from 1400 to 2000 in the Alexander Prison, from 50 to 200 in the Nicholas Works, and from 45 to 50 in the Irkutsk State saltern.

The Irkutsk private saltern employs from 25 to 30 convicts and the Ust-Kutsk from 40 to 50.

In 1894, a considerable number of them were employed in the construction of the sixteenth section of the Mid-Siberian Railway, comprising a distance of thirty-six versts between the rivers Belaya and Kitoi. This experiment was attended by marked success.

The exile-settlers who have passed the stage of hard labour and those exiled by the Administration retain their criminal propensities, and are a heavy burden upon the local population of Siberia, which they constantly demoralise.

## The Yeniseisk Government 81

According to the statistics of the Tiumen exile board, among the total number of 908,266 convicts exiled to Siberia from 1823 to 1898, 500,000 were forwarded during this period of seventy-five years to the government of Eastern Siberia and mainly to the Yeniseisk and Irkutsk Governments.

We were hurried in starting from Irkutsk, and my bill was presented just as I was in the act of so doing. Even in my haste I noted the amount as being excessive and promptly saw an overcharge of ten roubles.

The heavy luggage having gone ahead, I mounted into a little drosky with my servant and drove off through the silent town and over the wooden bridge to the station. That bridge has to be taken away every fall for some weeks; so until the ice forms the town is practically cut off from the railway.

The start from Irkutsk was anything but pleasant; the usual midnight hour—again the question why? —the unfailing crowd and dreadful confusion, followed by a ride of four hours, when we were landed at 6 A.M. on the shores of Lake Baikal.





## CHAPTER X

### EASTERN SIBERIA

**E**ASTERN SIBERIA is subject to a Governor-General, and comprises the Yeniseisk and Irkutsk Governments and the territory of Yakutsk. It covers a superficial area of 132,600 square geographical miles, and contains a population of 1,328,-150 as shown by the census of 1897, principally concentrated within the range of the Great Siberian highway, which, as the chief commercial artery of the country, ever attracted the economic life of Eastern Siberia. The Great Siberian main line, running from the boundary of Eastern Siberia across the Tomsk Government to Lake Baikal, has chosen its course through localities contiguous to the Siberian trade route, thus extending its mighty influence not only throughout the Yeniseisk and Irkutsk Governments, but also over the more distant Yakutsk territory.

The Irkutsk Government is essentially mountainous; plains and river valleys occupy only a small part of its area. Alpine mountains cover the southwestern, the south, and south-eastern parts of the

Government and skirt the western and south-eastern shores of Baikal. The grand Sayan mountain chain occupies the southern borders of both Governments. A line of posts, representing the frontier, dividing Russian territory from China, runs along the top of the mountains, following the direction of the Nerchinsk highway.

The Sayan chain stretches in a solid mass across the territory of Yeniseisk and through the western part of the Irkutsk Government, putting out branches which run far into the interior of the territory. The Sayan system is more intricate on the south-east of the Irkutsk Government, where it separates into parallel ridges broken by perpendicular valleys, among which the numerous left tributaries of the Angara wind their course towards the plateau of Eastern Siberia. The Sayan chain, after joining the Altai Mountains west of the river Yenisei, bears the name Shabin-Ola or Belogorie, and is called Ergik-Targak-Taiga east of the Yenisei. Towards the south there is a wide plain within the limits of the Chinese Empire, which, being surrounded by mountains, was the cradle of the Turkish tribes, which thence spread all over Asia. The highest mountain group of the Sayan chain rises at the south-eastern corner of the Irkutsk Government; its summits, covered with perpetual snow, reach an altitude of 11,430 feet at their most elevated point, Munku-Sardyk, or Silver Mountain, which, feeding considerable glaciers, stands on the frontier of the Chinese Empire. Numerous ridges stretch north of these peaks, the Biriusinsk Mountains, rising to a height of 6200 feet at the south-western corner of

## 84      The Great Siberian Railway

the Irkutsk Government, being the most considerable among them. Farther are the Idinsk Mountains, the Kitoi Alps, and the Tunkinsk belki following to the north the valley of the Irkut.

The Baikal Mountains, the Khamar-Daban, the Littoral, and Okotsk ridges, leaving the Sayan in detached parallel lines, skirt the wide valley which yields shelter to the Baikal, one of the grandest fresh-water lakes in the world.

Eastern Siberia is endowed with very great mineral wealth; alluvial gold was first found in the year 1830; afterwards it was discovered throughout the vast territory of the Government. Gold is mostly found in the sand of rivers and small streams.

The geological formation of the deposits is various, but shows a predominance of slate rocks. The thickness of the gold-bearing strata varies from two to three sazhens (seven feet to the sazhen), and their extent from one to fifty versts. The proportion of gold is also different according to the depth of the deposit. The gold strata are usually covered by a layer of alluvium, called the "turf."

The gold-mining regions of the Government are administered and managed by the two mining departments of Tomsk and Irkutsk. All the gold mines of the Yeniseisk Government pertain to the Tomsk department, with the exception of those which, included in the Biriusinsk group, are divided into three mining districts: Achinsk-Minusinsk, comprising the mines of the Achinsk, Minusinsk, and Usinsk districts; South Yeniseisk, containing the southern part of the Yeniseisk district, the Krasnoyarsk and Kansk districts; and the North Yeniseisk,

*i.e.*, the northern part of the Yeniseisk district. The mining district of Biriusinsk is under the management of the mining department of Irkutsk.

In the Achinsk district, most of the gold mines occur in the valleys of rivers and small streams belonging to the basin of the Chulym, and along the unimportant rivers falling into the Yenisei.

The gold mines of the Minusinsk and Usinsk districts form one system, comprising the tributaries of the rivers Yenisei and Abakan, which do not contain any rich deposits. The gold-mining company of Usinsk, obtaining from five to seven puds per annum, and the mines of Okulov, which at the beginning of 1899 were purchased by a Belgian joint stock company, are the most important in this region.

In the Yeniseisk district, the gold mines are situated on the right side of the Yenisei, between the rivers Angara and Podkamennaya Tunguska, and throughout the basin of numerous small rivers falling into the two above-mentioned tributaries of the Yenisei; gold is also to be found along the valleys of the affluents of the Pit, which crosses the gold-bearing region and divides it into the two most equal, the North and South Yeniseisk mining districts. The gold mines situated in the Yeniseisk district on the rivers Uderei and Mamona have been worked since 1839, and soon became famous on account of their rich output. Within the period of the first ten years, the amount of the annual output was represented by one thousand puds; since that time, the quantity of extracted gold has been decreasing from year to year, and now scarcely amounts to a few puds.

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The total quantity of gold obtained up to the present time is 27,000 puds, with a value of 350,000,000 roubles—about \$175,000,000.

Silver and copper ores occur frequently in the valley of the Yenisei River, and were known to the natives of the country, the ancient Chud. Silver ore is often found in connection with copper pyrites. The first copper foundry of Lugovsk, which has long since ceased to work, was established in Eastern Siberia in the Minusinsk district on the site of the old Chud mines, towards the end of the eighteenth century.

Although very abundant throughout the Irkutsk Government, iron is worked only on the lower reaches of the Oka, an affluent of the Angara, where stands the Nicholas cast-iron foundry, iron works, and rail rolling-mill.

Coal deposits have been discovered throughout the vast territory of Eastern Siberia, and recently along the Great Siberian Railroad, by geological parties specially despatched to explore this region.

Extensive beds of graphite, amounting to about 10,000,000 puds, are scattered over the Yeniseisk Government, specially in the Turukhansk district, along the lower reaches of the Nizhniaya Tunguska and its tributaries. On being subjected to numerous tests, this graphite proved to be of excellent quality, comparable to that of Cumberland and Ceylon. The Irkutsk Government also abounds in graphite deposits: within its confines, in the Tunkin Mountains, graphite of excellent quality was found in 1842 by the merchant Aliber, and has been worked for a long time for Faber's pencil manufactory.

Naphtha has been discovered in small quantities within the range of the Irkutsk coal-bearing region called Idan, situated on the right bank of the Angara, forty versts from Irkutsk.

The fauna of Eastern Siberia is also the same as in its western part, represented by species of the Tundra and of the Altai plateau. It may be mentioned as a remarkable phenomenon that the river Yenisei forms the line on the east which is never passed by the beaver.

The census of 1897 showed a population of 1,066,419 (599,075 males, 507,344 females) in the Yeniseisk and Irkutsk Governments. The former numbers a total of 559,902 (291,555 males, 268,347 females), while the latter contains a total of 506,517 (267,520 males, 238,997 females). In the Yeniseisk Government the proportion is 92.0 women to 100 men, and in the Irkutsk Government 85.6 women to 100 men. There are 0.24 inhabitants to every square verst in the Yeniseisk Government.





## CHAPTER XI

### HISTORY OF LAKE BAIKAL

**B**AIKAL—the “Holy Sea,” so called by the Russians—is one of the largest fresh-water lakes in the world, being surpassed only by America’s three greatest lakes, and by Victoria Nyanza in Africa. It runs south-west to north-east for 600 versts, and is some 80 wide at the widest point. The greatest depth comes near its southern end, where the line shows more than 3000 feet. It is Alpine in character, and lies 1500 feet above the sea, while the mountains on the eastern shore rise 4500 feet above the lake’s surface.

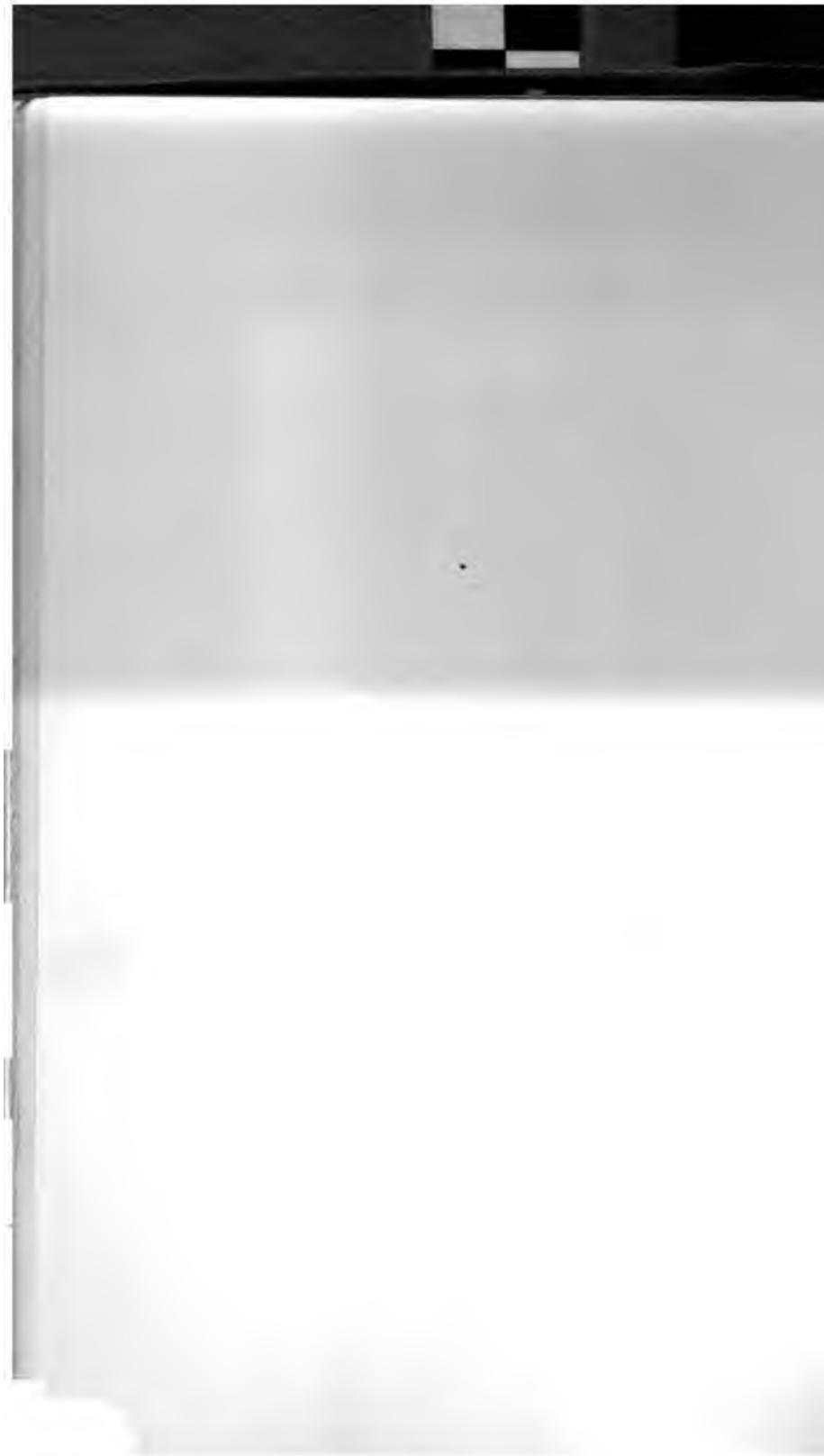
Baikal is for the natives a spot of romance, story, and superstition. Each cape, of which there are many, is named by them after some animal or fish. (The island of Olkhon is by the Zama priests and Buriat-Shamans supposed to be the abode of the evil spirit “Begdozi,” and they offer him sacrifices.)

The cape at the upper end of the island, as stated by Drizhenko, presents a strange phenomenon: a peculiarly shaped and immense cliff rises from the water’s edge, forming a narrow but long wall which, from a certain point, presents a perfectly regular



SHORES OF LAKE BAIKAL.

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## History of Lake Baikal 89

profile several sazhens in height. Opposite to the island of Olkhon, a large peninsula, called the Holy Cape, protrudes from the eastern shore, having on both sides the deep bays of Chivirkul and Barguzin. This peninsula has the form of a regular triangle, in the middle of which a mountain ridge stretches for a distance of thirty versts. The extreme northern end of the peninsula presents a high, wooded, almost vertical ridge with a craggy summit, from which flows a liquid called "Imusha" by the Tungus. According to Georgi, it is a kind of mineral oil. Others believe it to be produced by the decomposition of the guano of cormorants, herons, sea-gulls, and other birds, which come to the island in infinite numbers, mainly during their migration. The rocky Cape Shaman is situated on the eastern shore, north of the Holy Cape ( $55^{\circ}$  north latitude). Among its numerous cliffs, three are very high, rising in a vertical line to a height of two hundred feet above the level of the lake. One of them has the form of an immense head with a huge nose and big holes instead of eyes; the crevice which represents the mouth affords shelter to flocks of sea-cormorants. The other cliffs consist of dark quartz of horny formation. The Tungus give the name of Khamanril to this cape, and consider the first cliff to be the sea-god Dianda, while the other two represent inferior deities. The Shamans render worship to Dianda, in order that he may forbid the waves to drown the Tungus falling into the sea, order them to drive shoals of fish to the shore, etc. On the western side, to the south of Olkhon, the Kolokolnaya (Bell-tower) Bay is very picturesque; it is so called on

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account of two cliffs standing, one on either side of it, and looking, at a distance, like two bell-towers. At the western edge of the Baikal, the Shaman Cliff, venerated by the Buriats, stands near the Kultuksk Bay. At the outflow of the Angara, there is a submerged granite cliff, called Shamanka, with a circumference of seven sazhens, which rises for only one sazhen above the level of the Baikal, and is considered by the Shamans and Lamas to be the dwelling-place of the invincible White God, to whom they offer sacrifices on this cliff. The lake is surrounded by places which are held in veneration, accounting for the name of Holy Sea given to it.

The water of the Baikal is clear and transparent. Its temperature has as yet been very insufficiently investigated, and is only now being examined by the expedition under Drizhenko. The investigations of Dydovsky and Godlevsky, made in 1869-1876, showed "an invariable temperature at deep places and a slight fluctuation at the surface near the shore; this is, in their opinion, the characteristic property of the water in the Baikal. The temperature at the surface of the lake varies and does not exceed 10° C.; at a greater depth the fluctuation is less, and 48 sazhens deep, the difference between the lowest and highest temperature during the year is 2°; 5.70 sazhens deep it is 1° C.; still deeper the temperature does not vary during the year and is +3.5° C. On the surface of the lake, mostly on its eastern part, between the Holy Cape and the mouth of the Turka, there frequently occurs floating wax or 'bikerit,' which is used by the inhabitants as a medicine for rheumatism and scurvy. It burns very quickly, with

## History of Lake Baikal 91

a bright flame, and leaves much soot. This substance was subjected, by Shamarin in Irkutsk, to analysis by dry distillation: (volatilisation 140° C.) 8.44 per cent. of liquid distillate—burning oil; 61.17 per cent. of solids—paraffin of the best quality. In connection with sea-wax, springs containing an oily liquid very much like naphtha have been discovered at the bottom of the Baikal, opposite to the Turka."

During a storm, the waves of the Baikal rise to six or seven feet. According to Georgi, the equilibrium of the water and air is very easily disturbed on account of the extraordinary unsteadiness of the Baikal, which is explained by the peculiar lightness and the great depth of the water. Storms occur frequently, but are of no long duration, breaking against the surrounding cliffs. Thunder-storms gather from all sides in summer, but never pass over the lake. In June and July the Baikal is almost calm. During this lull numerous aquatic plants float on the surface of the water; the local inhabitants call this time the "blossoming" of the Baikal. The lake begins to freeze in November, but it is never frost-bound before the middle of December or the beginning of January; this fact cannot be explained by the absence of cold, but only by the unsteadiness and agitation of the water surface. Being frost-bound for a period of four to four and a half months the lake has an ice cover sometimes nine and a half feet deep. Sledge traffic lasts for three months; at the end of April the ice melts near the shores and softens. During the winter time, although the ice-cover is very thick, wide cracks break its surface; when it

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meets again, the ice piles up in heaps called "toros." These crevasses, which have a breadth of three to six feet and more, are sometimes a verst long and form a serious impediment to communication on the ice. Their origin remains as yet unexplained; some believe that the ice breaks under the force of the wind and air pressure; others suppose that it is produced by the ebb and flow, but this is still insufficiently proved by science. The breaking of the ice surface, as in the Alpine glaciers, is accompanied by a loud crash, resembling an explosion, followed by a long rolling noise. The crevasse is instantly filled with water to the level of the ice, forming a kind of river. In eight to fourteen days it freezes again, and a new crevasse appears at another place. The ice melts slowly and this process lasts nearly two months.

The fauna of the Baikal is very varied and numbers many species; it plays an important part in the industry of the country. The Baikal is most plentifully provided with fish, and supplies the surrounding district. In the fish industry the omul, the Baikal gwiniad, the char, and the salmo occupy the first place. A most interesting and little-known fish, characteristic of the Baikal, is the dracunculus. It is six vershoks long, the head occupying a third of its entire length; the eyes are uncommonly large and protruding; from the gills to the tail, fins are attached on each side. This fish occurs in the deepest places of the lake (over three hundred sazhens) and lives under the pressure of an immense body of water; when brought to the surface, the fish bursts and melts in the sun. This is the reason why no-

body ever saw a living specimen. Some of the zoologists class the dracunculus with the species of fish developing their ova inside the fish, and some of the fish traders say that it produces two little fish alive. According to the investigations of Dydovsky, the Baikal also abounds in crustaceans and gasteropods. In these waters there are four kinds of sponges of a dark emerald colour, containing much chlorophyl. The inhabitants use a fresh sponge for polishing copper (tea urns, etc.), and a dried sponge is employed to polish metals by the silversmiths of Irkutsk; the lower classes attribute to it medicinal properties.

Among the most characteristic inhabitants of the Baikal waters is the seal, called nerpa by the local inhabitants, and khansaganun by the Buriats. This form is exclusively proper to the Baikal and recalls the European *Phoca annelata*. The local population kill the nerpa during the whole summer, from the end of June, and employ the skins of the young animals in making valuable overcoats called "dokha."

The inhospitable Baikal is designed by nature herself to be the chief way of communication with the contiguous country, which is covered by mountain ridges and has no overland communication beyond a few impracticable paths. Already at the end of the seventeenth century the Baikal possessed a navy which served for postal communications.

On the 23rd of June, 1891, the present Emperor Nicholas II., on his way from the Far East, crossed Lake Baikal on the steamer *Speransky* from the landing-place, Boyarskaya, to the source of the Angara, and farther to Irkutsk.

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With a view to comply with the Imperial command relative to the establishment of uninterrupted railway communication from the Ural to the Pacific Littoral, surveys were conducted with a view to surmount the difficulties connected with the construction of a railway line round the Baikal, skirting the lake from the south. The preliminary surveys, made by Engineer Viazemsky in 1888-90, showed the possibility of establishing a railway route from Irkutsk up the valley of the Irkut, which, approaching the lake near the settlement of Kultuk, should proceed farther along its shore to the landing-place of Mysovaya and join the Trans-Baikal line. In order to straighten the line, and to avoid the construction of elevated viaducts in the pass of Zyrian-skaya Luka, formed by the Irkut breaking through the Zyrkuzun chain, the construction of a tunnel of 1700 sazhens was projected. The total length of the line comprised 282 versts, at a cost of 25,000,000 roubles, or 80,000 roubles per verst. In 1894, the expedition of Engineer Adrianov tried to take the line from the summit of the neighbouring mountains towards the head-waters of the rivers Olkha, tributary of the Irkut, and the Krutaya Guba, falling into Lake Baikal. From 1895 to 1896 the expedition of Engineer Doks repeated the surveys of Engineer Viazemsky, and made explorations in fresh directions, with a view to cross the Baikal Mountains, and to approach the Baikal along the rivers Polovinnaya and Angasolka. All the surveys which have been made show that the construction of this line offers great technical difficulties. The project of Engineer Doks included a tunnel of three and a half versts

with an estimated cost of 80,000 roubles per verst, and a total length of 291 versts. In 1898, the expedition of Engineer Savremovich again conducted surveys for the line round the Baikal in other directions.

Final surveys of two routes in connection with geological explorations are being made, and the results obtained will serve to fix the precise direction of the Circum-Baikal railway line. In the eastern section, admitting only one route, the line will run along the shore of the Baikal. Starting at the station of Kultuk, the line of the eastern section runs first through a swampy meadow, crosses the Kultuchnaya by a bridge, and, traversing at the 3rd verst the Shaman Cape, proceeds by a sandy valley separating Shaman from the Baikal. At the 9th verst, spurs of the Khamar Daban, pressing closely to the Baikal, prevent the line being taken along the shore; its course passes through cliffs stretching for a distance of a verst.

At the 11th and 12th verst the line runs through the abrupt and steep Cape Kerkidaim, protruding far into the lake and presenting a heap of fragments from the cliff. At this place the Baikal is very deep near the shore, there is no strip of land near the water, and the cape has to be traversed by a cutting at its narrowest point. Between the 31st and the 47th verst the mountain spurs retreat from the Baikal, forming an undulating plateau; here the line leaves the lake, skirts the settlement of Utulik, and at the 47th verst again approaches the Baikal. From the 47th to the 55th verst the line runs by a steep slope intersected by streams and springs, and crosses the Snezhnaya, the largest river in the Kultuk-Mysovaya section. At

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the 113th verst the line traverses the Pereyemnaya within a verst of its mouth, through a locality contained between high capes jutting into the lake. At the 118th verst the line enters a level plateau and follows the shore; at the 139th and 140th verst it runs through the valley of the Mishikha, avoiding Cape Kliuev, and at the 158th verst, after having passed over the river Mysovaya, turns abruptly and joins the Trans-Baikal line at the station of Mysovaya. The total length of the eastern section is 162.04 versts; it is projected according to specifications adopted in level sections, but admits 4.1 per cent. of curves with a radius of 150 sazhens and grades of .006. Part of the line in the eastern section has been in process of construction since 1899 for a distance of forty versts, from Mysovaya to Pereyemnaya. The construction of this part of the line to the station of Pereyemnaya, standing on the other side of the lake opposite to the station of Baikal, will offer a much shorter way for passengers and goods than the stormy lake.

The Government has established two beacons on the lake, which project their light for a great distance over the stormy and unfriendly waters. One of the beacons stands on the Olkhon Strait, on the cliff called Mare's Head, at a height of forty-five feet above the level of the Baikal. The other is placed at the mouth of the Selenga, rising forty-eight feet above the level of the lake. Both beacons burn with a white and constant light, reaching a distance of eighteen to twenty versts. They are lit every night, and burn from sunset to sunrise.



## CHAPTER XII

### THE PASSAGE OF LAKE BAIKAL

THE day is clear and cold and brilliant as we get out of our train in the early morning on the shores of this famous lake. A long pier extends quite out into the water and our steamer lies at its extreme end, affording us a brisk, fresh, and very welcome walk after the confined air in the car.

A descent into the cabin and several glasses of hot tea place us in better condition to enjoy the day. Bundled in fur we are seated on the top deck with the great lake all before us. The air is clear and so transparent that far-off capes and mountains seem but a short distance away. The water for some hundred square yards around us is free of ice and lies silent and darkly blue under the brilliant sun. Off and away north and east spreads the surface of the lake, a vast field of glittering white until it meets the mountains rising some four thousand feet above the eastern shore, blue at the base, snow-capped on all the long line of their jagged summits. To the northward the ice-bound surface of the lake meets the bending arch of a deep-blue sky; the dry air glitters and quivers and is very cold, yet with a

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coldness that seems full of life and health. Here as elsewhere there is no wind, hence all Siberia seems a land of deathly stillness, with no dampness to render it insupportable.

We are not on the great ice breaker *Baikal*. She is off up the lake clearing a pass for us, but this ship is of like construction, though smaller, and of course of less power.

We meet on this ship an English engineer, Mr. Handy, whose explanations are most interesting and who gives us some interesting photos of hereabouts. As we start I ask where we are to find passage, and he waves his hand directly towards the apparently perfect field of ice. The little ship takes on full headway quickly, and as we near the ice I notice what appears to be a broad belt of jagged ice apparently frozen solid once more. Into this our ship rushes at full speed and we hold on fast in anticipation of the coming jar, and a jar it is, but the boat is equal to the occasion and the ice parts before her. It is a wonderful sight, and most thrilling. The ship moves steadily onward, turning up great blocks of deep blue ice fifty feet long and three feet thick, which pile up on either side as high as her deck, and then fall back with a sobbing sound into the densely blue waters in our wake. One never tires of watching the churning and tearing up the vast blocks of ice. This ice is sometimes forty-eight inches thick, and then it is too much even for the great breaker, but she has cleared this pathway, breaking through some thirty-six inches and more. Even while I look the channel behind seems again to be a solid surface. The whole surface of the lake, as far as the eye



THE GREAT ICE-BREAKER, "BAIKAL"



## The Passage of Lake Baikal 99

can reach, glistens and sparkles off to the dark blue mountains, while here and there trains of sleighs glide over its surface.

All this gives one an excellent idea of life during an Arctic exploration. It would be quite possible to run the train over this ice for three months, and certainly a trolley line for a longer period. Even now, the 3rd of May, the ice is in perfect condition, and shows no signs of rotting save near its edges.

The *Baikal* has cleared the passage for more than half way—about twenty miles—and we find her hard at work. It is a singular experience, this debarkation in the middle of the lake. The gangplank is let down and we pass out onto the ice, forgetting entirely the fathoms on fathoms of water below us.

There are a hundred or more sleighs awaiting us, some with one, some with two, and some with three horses. They are crude structures made of wood bound together, with the body of plaited straw, filled with loose straw, and covered with a robe of fur.

Into this I am bundled with my small things and, the driver mounting his post in front, we start off to the jingle of bells, not forgetting a last look at the animated scene around us; the big puffing steamer apparently frozen in solid, the pushing passengers descending from her, the crowd of men, horses, and sleighs all around, with the babel of voices, the whole surrounded by the glistening white surface of the lake. Some hundreds of feet in advance of our ship the *Baikal* is at work, and we drive near her for an instant.

The exploration of the mountainous country contiguous to the southern part of the Baikal basin, in

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connection with the difficult technical conditions attached to the construction of an uninterrupted Great Siberian main line, evoked the scheme for building a special steam-ferry for the transport of trains over the Baikal, which was to be supplied with ice-breaking appliances and would establish continuous steam communication between the terminus of the Mid-Siberian Railway line on the Baikal and the starting-point of the Trans-Baikal line.

The application in the Old World of these means of transport for trains, as in the United States, effected with the help of ice-breakers, is entirely due to the initiative of Prince Khilkov, Minister of Ways of Communication, who first saw the advantage of applying ice-breakers to Russian marine and river navigation.

The ice-breaker *Baikal* was constructed at the works of Armstrong in England for the transport of trains over the Baikal. It was forwarded in separate pieces, which were put together on the shore of the lake. The fittings and the engines, boilers, water-pumping machinery, etc., were made here. For the launching of the ship stocks were built under and above the water; their construction offered great difficulties on account of the rocky shores and the frequent storms on the Baikal.

The ice-breaker was put together by Russian workmen, who were partly brought from St. Petersburg. The general supervision of the construction of the ice-breaker and of the docks was entrusted to the ship engineer Zabolotsky.

The ice-breaker is made of solid Siemens and Marten steel. Entire length, 290 feet; beam, 57 feet;

## The Passage of Lake Baikal 101

draught, 18 feet fore, and 20 feet aft; speed, 20½ versts; displacement with full cargo, 4200 tons. The ice-breaker is provided with three triple-expansion engines with a total of 3750 horse-power. Two engines are placed in the stern and are separated by a longitudinal water-tight partition; they work the propellers of the ice-breaker. An engine in the forepart of the vessel serves to work the fore-screw breaking the ice. The screws are provided with four paddles. There are fifteen cylindrical boilers enclosed in two compartments divided by transverse water-tight partitions.

The ice-breaker contains ballast distributed in different tanks between the double bottom of the ship and also fore and aft, holding 580 tons of water. The belt on the water-line consists of steel plates an inch thick, the sheathing is even and with inner layers. With a view to stop the blows of the ice against the hull of the ship and to render more solid its inner side, throughout its length at the level of the ice it is provided with wedge-shaped wooden chocks covered with longitudinal beams; thus the timber belt has a thickness of about two feet.

This ice-breaker is somewhat like Nansen's famous *Fram*, with stem and stern adapted for ice-breaking, capable of forward and backward motion. It carries twenty-five loaded waggons placed on the main deck on three pairs of rails laid along the axis of the ship; the cabins on the upper deck accommodate about 150 passengers. The ship breaks the ice to a depth of four feet. In addition to this ice-breaker, which is the second in the world in size, another has been constructed at the station of List-

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vennichnaya. It has received the name of *Angara*, and is smaller than the first; length, 195 feet; beam, 34; draught, 15 feet; speed,  $12\frac{1}{2}$  knots. The engine is triple-expansion with 1250 horse-power; there are four boilers on the locomotive type. The engine and boilers are also separated by a transverse watertight partition. The construction of this ice-breaker was completed in the autumn of 1900. It serves mainly for the transportation of passengers. This is the one we were on.

For the repair of this vessel wooden docks have been built on the Baikal. The landing-places, Barabchuk on the western side and Mysovaya on the eastern, are provided with protecting moles and dams.

The cost of the whole steam communication, including landing-places, amounts to 5,621,000 roubles.

After the completion of the Circum-Baikal line, which will connect the Mid-Siberian and the Trans-Baikal Railways, the ice-breaker might be employed with some success for purposes of navigation on the Baikal, but her work is not over here as an ice-breaker—even as I watch her she has backed off about five hundred feet, and, putting on full steam, rushes at the ice before her. There is a crack and roar, with muttered thunderings far down beneath and around us as the ice gives way and great blocks turn their glistening edges upward, and, piling for a moment on either side, close again behind the ship, which finally seems to mount for a third of her length upon the ice, but settles back again, her great weight not having broken through.

I am told that yesterday she moved forward eight times her length (2400 feet) in an hour, but she is



BREAKING THE ICE ON LAKE BAIKAL

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## The Passage of Lake Baikal 103

still twenty-one versts from the shore, toward which my troika is speeding. Drawn by three sturdy little horses, we fly silently along save for the bells hung on an arch over the middle horse; the two outer beasts run loose with their heads turned so that they can see the driver out of one eye. He flourishes constantly a short whip, all the while giving utterance to an encouraging cry, "No, no, no, ovah," repeated almost constantly.

The troika is a tarantass on runners, and my mind reverts to far different scenes in Central Asia.

This air is wonderfully clear and the shore appears but a mile or so away, but we do not cover that mile for a long time. The ride is delightful and sunny, though one must keep bundled up in furs. Every now and then with an extra flourish and shout the ponies are sent forward at greater speed, and pass with a jump one of the many crevasses, sometimes a foot wide. As I look downward, I can see the black waters and feel glad that all are safely over. These crevasses are sometimes six feet wide and thus become a serious obstacle to winter traffic.

At last the snow gets slushy. We drop into one or two holes a foot or more deep, are jerked out and onward, until we slide off the ice onto the mud, and after a sturdy haul are landed at the railway station on the eastern side, and Baikal is over and done with so far as we are concerned.

It has been a most interesting experience, and I am fortunate to have had it just now, while the ice-breaking is on. Earlier it would have been merely a sleigh-ride, and later a water passage, but this experience has been unique.

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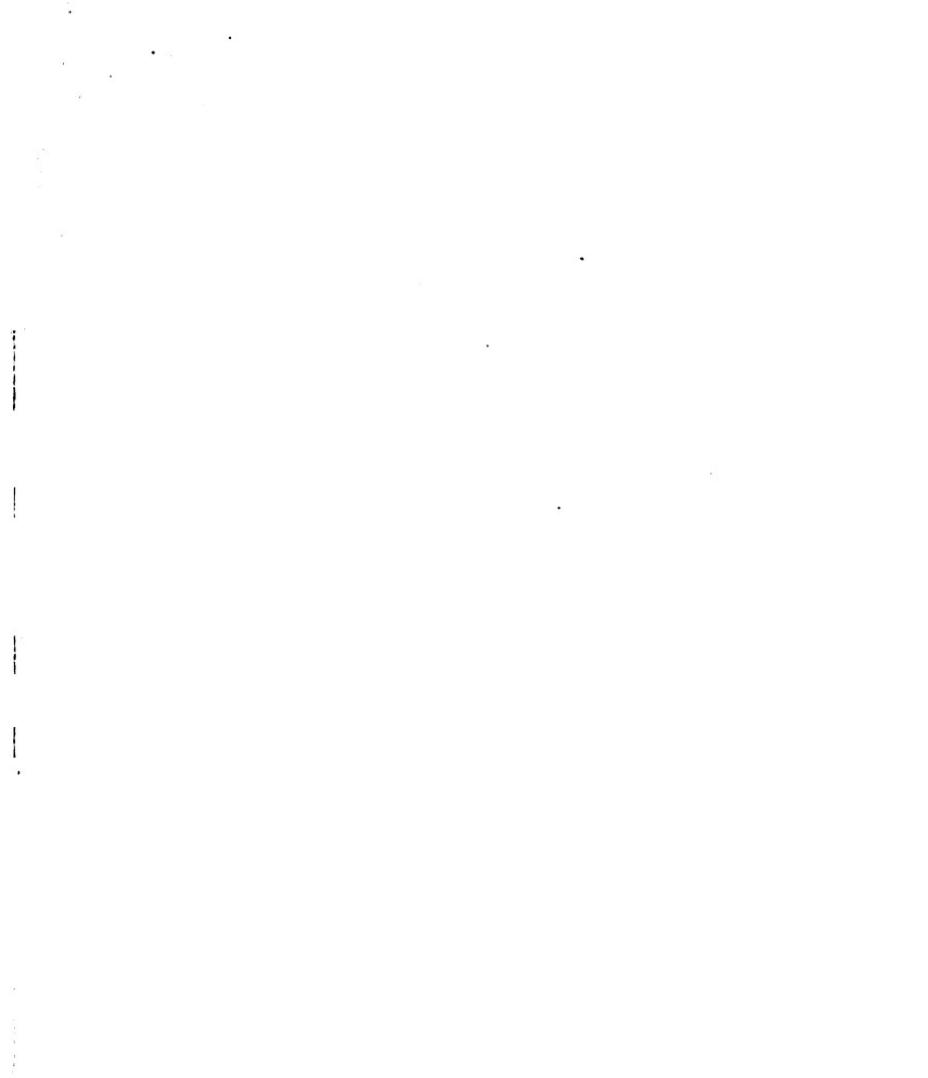
From Petersburg onward, the Baikal has been held up as a bugbear. When in Irkutsk the Chief of Police told us the passage could not be made, and we would have to return to that town, but we insisted and came on. I was told in Petersburg that I would have to make a circuit round the southern end of the lake, some 275 miles, over awful roads with deepest mud, as the snow would be gone, but "Never cross a bridge till you get there" is a saying every traveller should adopt as his own, especially in Russia.

I have come steadily onward and here I am, gazing backward over the great Baikal, the passage of which I shall always remember as one of the most interesting in all my years of travel.





ON THE ICE OF LAKE BAIKAL





## CHAPTER XIII

### THE TRANS-BAIKAL AND ITS PEOPLE

I AM the first passenger to reach the shore, and, being greatly weary, am desirous of getting into the train to rest, but am told that that cannot be done until the proper time, six hours hence. A pleasant prospect! No station-house worthy of the name, a board walk, mud, and a pine forest.

I hunt up the station-master and present my papers from the authorities in Petersburg, with the result that I am at once ushered into my compartment in the train. M. D'A., French Consul in China, coming along, invites me into his car, and I am shortly established there, which means no change until we reach the end of our journey at Port Arthur. How I bless him for that!

We shall journey through the Trans-Baikal until we pass into Manchuria. It is some 500,000 square miles in extent, larger than all Germany. From our first view it is evidently mountainous, its peaks ranging from 4000 feet up beyond the line of perpetual snow.

I was told yesterday that so far as gold was concerned the Transvaal was poor by comparison with this section of Siberia.

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In the western part of the Trans-Baikal, the greatest number of gold mines are centred in the Barguzinsk district. In the eastern portion, the Nerchinsk district is the richest and contains thirty-two gold mines, twenty-one private mines, eleven belonging to the Imperial Cabinet. The western part of this region is far superior to the eastern in respect to the quantity of metal mined and the abundance of auriferous gravel.

Besides the gold mines of the Imperial Cabinet, the eastern mining district of the Trans-Baikal contains important private mines, belonging to the Dauria Gold Mining Company, to the Trans-Baikal Society of Vtorov and Company, and the Onon Company of Sabachnikov Brothers.

Silver and lead mines occur at many places in the Nerchinsk Works district and belong to the Cabinet of his Imperial Majesty. They were discovered near the remains of Chud mines in 1689, and were chiefly worked from 1763 to 1768. Afterwards the works were considerably reduced, on account of the inundation of the mines and economic considerations.

Among the ninety vein and nidus mines, only four are worked at present, yielding about sixty puds annually.

Copper deposits exist at several points throughout the Argun and Onon basins, but they have not been worked up to the present time.

Tin ores were discovered in 1811. They occur in the valley of the Little Kulinda, tributary of the Onon; near the village of Nizhni-Sharanei; near the settlement of Zavitinsk, to the left of the Onon and on the right side of the Ingoda. The Onon mine

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was worked during thirty years; by order of the Government small quantities of metal were obtained from it at various times. This locality is the only one throughout the Russian territory which affords "tinstone," or cassiterite, found in quartz veins in grains or imperfectly formed crystals of a deep red-brown colour. In consequence of the bad organisation of the mining industry, the working of the tin mines stopped long ago. At present, thanks to their proximity to the Siberian main line, it may be hoped that the exploitation of the mines will be resumed and attended with success, and that the Onon tin, on account of its superior quality, will enjoy the same renown in the world's market as the tin of the Malay and Sunda Islands.

Mercury was discovered in 1759, in the Idikansk mine of the Nerchinsk district; however, as no success attended the working of the limestone veined with cinnabar, the exploitation of the mine was soon abandoned.

Precious stones occur frequently in the Trans-Baikal. Most remarkable is the granite mountain, Adun-Chillon, rising between the rivers Onon and Onon-Borsia, where topaz, beryl, aquamarine, Siberian topaz, and other stones are plentiful. Garnets in small crystals are also found on the Onon, eighty-five versts from Nerchinsk; blocks of nephrite occur on the Onon and its tributaries.

Salt is obtained at the following works: of Selingsinsk in the district of the same name, and in Tiransk, Troitsko-Savsk district, where brine is obtained from salt lakes. Among salt lakes, there is only Lake Borzinsk in the Nerchinsk Works district;

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the salt does not settle every year. Glauber's salt, employed in glass works, is got from the Dorinsk lakes in the Barguzinsk district. The total output of salt in the Trans-Baikal amounts on the average to forty thousand puds annually.

At the stations along the line there is much more life than I have noticed in any section of the Empire, and the people seem in a gayer mood. Smiles are frequent on their faces and they race around in a happy fashion. Yet they are considered far down in the social scale and strongly tainted by the convict life, but they evidently do not care. The women are gaily decked in many-coloured calicoes, with stately turbans of the same material. The men are a sturdy lot.

At nearly every station there is a swing formed by a tall telegraph pole with a revolving circle of iron on top, to which are suspended several long pieces of rope with looped ends, into which a leg is thrust, while they seize the rope with one hand, and then all running round the pole, let go and fly around at a great pace.

At the town of Petrovsk, I run across a name familiar to many a home. The place was made a place of exile for political prisoners concerned in the conspiracy of 1825, known as the "Dikarbists." They were confined in a prison especially constructed for them, to which their wives were allowed to come—a low dark prison with an inner court, and among the names I note that of Trubetskoi. Later on they were transported to different sections of Siberia. Only one of the prisoners lived his life out here, first as an exile-settler, and then, as a nobleman, held office under the Government.

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The original town lies opposite the railway station on the other side of the river, and is a collection of one-story houses, never painted, and now dark with age. What must have been the prison still stands, surrounded by a stockade. The line follows the river Baliaya for some versts, then, turning north-east, ascends to the summit of the Tablonovy Mountains.

For the first time all through the Empire I have to-day noticed several towns with no churches.

We have left winter behind. It is balmy and warm to-day, and our carriage windows are wide open,—a marked contrast to the cold on Baikal.

Monday, May 5, 1902.

Early morning and cold. I have reached for my fur coat long since and drawn it over the double blanket, thereby securing so much additional warmth that I went soundly to sleep for another two hours. Sleep is over now, and should be after nine hours at a stretch. It requires considerable courage, however, to get out of a warm berth into the cold, walk the length of the car, rouse the stupid porter, and order the samovar, but it 's got to be done, so here goes. M. and Madame D'Anty are sound asleep, having waited up until midnight for a station reported to hold a buffet. Even the little dog is too tired to bark, so I have my tea to myself, making it and serving it myself, and reaching out for anything else the lunch-basket may hold, but with all Manchuria before me, where no buffets are reported, this must be done with caution or I would soon be keeping the fasts of the Church whether I desired to do

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so or not. The country this morning is not of interest to look at; let us see what it produces.

"The fauna of the Trans-Baikal territory assumes many various forms and contains, besides the species characteristic of the whole of Siberia, the steppe animals of Mongolia and some forms found in the Amur and in the Littoral countries of the Asiatic continent. The Siberian fauna, occurring almost throughout the whole country, keeps preferably to the west and northern parts of the territory, while the steppe animals are to be found in the south-eastern part, between the rivers Argun and Onon.

"Among the mammals (*Mammalia*) the most common are:

"Of the Carnivora—wild cat, lynx (rare in the territory), tiger (at times wanders from China without staying in this region), wolf, polecat, ermine, weasel, and sable. We read that 'the white sable occurs in the Barguzinsk district'; it is very rare and precious. There is also the steppe fox, bears, badger (met with mostly along the banks of the Selenga), glutton, and otter.

"Pinnipeds: seal sometimes leaving Lake Baikal, go up the Selenga to the town of Selenginsk, and are killed by the local inhabitants during the summer from the end of June, their skins being used for making very expensive seal overcoats called "dokha."

"The Nerchinsk, Zakamensk, and Barguzinsk squirrels—a striped squirrel—are considered the best and above half a million are taken every year. Siberian marmot, rat, mouse, water-rat, and harvest-mouse occur principally in the countries contiguous to Mongolia.

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"Wild boar are found in the valleys of the Khilok and Chikoi and close to the Baikal. Of the ruminant animals: the elk is plentifully represented throughout the region; the roe-deer occurs all over the country—its horns are sold in China, where they are employed as medicine; the deer, the roebuck, the musk-deer, inhabit preferably the south-western part of the region; the wild goat is only found in the most desert forests."

The two-humped camel, domesticated by the natives, is employed for the cultivation of the land and for carrying burdens; the horse, the wild horse, or dzhigitai, principally dwelling in the northern part of the Gobi and Tibet deserts; within the limits of the Trans-Baikal region, it occurs only in its southern part along the rivers Gazimur and Onon-Borzia. These horses live quite like wild animals and are the object of a peculiar and very interesting mode of hunting carried on by the natives. They kill only the stallions, using their flesh as food, and consider the tail to be an infallible remedy against sickness in animals. For this hunt, the native chooses an isabel or light-bay mare and, riding in the middle of the steppe, fastens his horse, and lies down in the grass. Perceiving the mare, the fiery dzhigitai rushes at her, believing her to be a mare of his own species, but remarking his mistake, stops-short, and at this moment is killed by the hunter.

The bird species are particularly numerous, reckoning about 328 varieties; 240 of them are common to Europe, 43 to Japan, India, the Sunda Islands, and Australia, and 45 belong strictly to Eastern Siberia. This great number of birds is plentifully

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represented only in summer: in winter the ornithological fauna consists of barely 50 species of European and Siberian birds, all the rest flying southwards across the Mongolian steppe. The arrival of the birds from their warmer sojourn commences at the beginning of March. Choosing their way along river valleys and lakes, avoiding mountain ranges, they fly across a country situated between the Angara, the Baikal, and the Torei-Nor; this locality is separated by the chain of the Kentei Mountains, which divides the flight of the birds into a north-western and north-eastern stream. The passage across the desert of the Mongolian steppe is very trying to the birds. Upon reaching Dauria, they take a rest, and regaining strength resume their flight to the north. The animation of the bird fauna reigning in summer declines at the beginning of August, when part of the birds are ready to migrate. The cranes open the migration, forming regular triangles and steering with harsh screams towards the lonely Mongolian steppe. The backward migration of the birds is not of long duration and closes at the beginning of October.

As far as concerns snakes and reptiles, not frequent in Northern Siberia, they are rather abundant in the Trans-Baikal. Besides the harmless snake and the common viper there are venomous snakes, belonging to the family of rattlesnakes.

Corn and oats of a superior quality are raised in Trans-Baikal, also buckwheat, millet, and rye.

The original inhabitants of Trans-Baikal were the Tungus and Mongols. On the banks of the river

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Onon Chingiz-Khan was born. Many are the legends and stories still told of him.

The Russians came here first in 1644. The stockaded post of Adinsk was built in 1649. The first settlers—in 1666—were voluntary emigrants but shortly afterward criminals and exiles were sent out here and the regular exile system was established in 1722. The convicts reprieved from death were sent here to the silver mines. With the entrance of Russia the trade with China began, and in 1727 the definite boundaries between the empires became “fixed,”—how particularly, one can to-day judge by the presence of the Russians in Port Arthur on the Pacific. The people at the stations are largely Orientals now, the native Buriats being strongly Mongolian in cast of countenance. The Russians are called “little Russians,” and as I have already stated, seem much happier than their brethren near the throne. The census of 1897 shows over 600,000 inhabitants. As usual the military form a large part of the whole. The Cossacks in war times are expected to furnish nearly ten thousand soldiers and four thousand horses, and half of that in times of peace. However, we have seen very few soldiers through Siberia so far, and none in transit. Manchuria will probably show a different state of affairs.

The native Buriats are either Buddhists or Tamaists, and speak the Mongol tongue. Their literature has existed only from the time they embraced Buddhism. Before that they had no alphabet. All the books they possess now are translations from the Tibetan language.

**The Khamta-Tama** is the religious chief, while the

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Tamas are the common priests. The chief lives at the monastery some twenty-five versts from Selenginsk near Lake Gusinoe, called lake of the priests.

The monastery resembles a town, and has a three-storied temple of Chinese architecture. Near it are seventeen small wooden buildings, one-storied, with Buddhist cupolas; each cupola is consecrated to a special object of worship. The Tamas live in houses around about.

Over one hundred Buddhists, seminarists, educated in the school of the Datsan, live here. The course of study lasts ten years. They learn prayers, Tibetan theology, the literature of Tibet and Mongolia, Tibetan medicine, astronomy, astrology, and Buddhist philosophy.

The Buriats, dwellers of the steppe, are cattle breeders and are governed by a native hereditary administration.

Our train is full of Russian emigrants, but they do not stop in Trans-Baikal, but pass on to the Amur region.

The convict exiles form three per cent. of the population and exert a most evil influence upon the whole. There are special prisons for them, and their number is sometimes as great as twenty-seven hundred. They are employed in mines and receive one sixteenth of the value of their work, reaching finally the stage of exile-settlers, of which there are seventeen thousand.

The greater part of Trans-Baikal has hardly been explored, only one-fourth being occupied, but with the completion of the railway matters began to change, and there seems much cause for hope in the

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future, though the character of the soil, together with the elevation of the country above the sea, are elements against its growth. Its pasture lands are enormous and very good. The camel is a common domestic animal in this cold, elevated region, being raised in large numbers by the inhabitants. There are ten thousand of them, mostly in the Cluta district. Tea is transported from China on camels and in small carts drawn by the sturdy little horses of this section. Most of it comes *via* the town of Kiakhta, and amounts to 2,500,000 puds per annum —a pud being about forty pounds.





## CHAPTER XIV

### THROUGH CHITA TO MANCHURIA

ALL the morning we have twisted and turned, now mounting and now descending through long cold valleys covered with what would seem to be buffalo grass. Mountains surround us on all sides, but the snow is all gone, save a patch or two now and then. The villages or any signs of life are few and far between but though the country seems lonely it does not possess the desolation of Western Siberia.

There are nine wires on the telegraph poles. Telegrams from Japan are all sent this way at a much cheaper rate than by cable. The culverts are all of stone, the banks sodded.

We reach Chita at 2 P.M., and have a wretched luncheon at the buffet, bad soup and steak that never was part of any beef. I think it was dog.

Chita is the chief town of the Trans-Baikal territory and stands on the river of that name. It was of no possible importance until the exile system made it so about 1825. The conspiracy of that year seems responsible for many towns in Siberia. Many of the prisons in Chita were built by the exiles themselves

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and occupied by them for several years. The prosperity of the place came entirely from the money expended by the prisoners to keep body and soul together. One wonders why they desired this, but then life is life, even in a Siberian prison, and death is—what?

One of the streets was and is named after Lady Trubetskoi.

The town now shows a population of eleven thousand. It is of the usual form, wide unpaved streets, low wooden houses for the most part, with now some of brick and stone, and the inevitable church, with its green domes.

Again I confess I do not understand the lists published of the educational and other public institutions of these Russian towns. That a town like this should, for instance, have thirteen public schools seems marvellous, especially when we take into consideration the fact that not one out of ten children one meets with seems to possess the least education. Here at least there is no population outside the town, save the wandering tribes, which certainly do not attend school.

From these reports one would conclude that Russia takes better care of her poor than any other nation, yet nowhere in Europe or America does one see such evidence of poverty, such sodden wretchedness, such evident lack of all education. Even in the great cities the servants cannot read, hence all the fronts of the shops are covered with pictorial signs.

Chita is 504 miles from Lake Baikal and we have been nearly forty-eight hours *en route*. This train

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is added to at every station, sometimes a passenger and sometimes a freight car. There are but two first-class coaches; ours, being considered a private car, is at the tail end of the train and has but four wheels; so it is fortunate that no speed is attained or we should be jerked off into space. The third-class passengers are packed like sardines. Their cars hold nothing save wooden bunks, two tiers thereof, and each section has four and sometimes six. One's health would certainly be jeopardised by a passage through any of them.

I notice that our car and the first-class cars are constantly guarded. Remembering the reports of Irkutsk, I am not surprised, and do not object in the least.

It is absolutely necessary to bring provisions with one after leaving Irkutsk, though I believe there is one train each week to Stretensk on the Amur with a dining car; go therein by all means if you can. Otherwise, bring baskets of provender. To-day, for instance, we had no opportunity for food until 3 P.M., and then it was vile. There was one wretched little eating-room filled with Russians, all of whom had long since finished their meal, but to the Russians the long smoke after dinner is an absolute necessity, and they do not leave their seats until that is finished to their satisfaction. You may stand around and starve for all they care. So it was to-day. We had to fairly shove our way between them. However, it is over and past, and we shall not return to Chita. But don't forget my warning when you come this way.

We are now in the Amur district and all the rivers

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flow into that great stream. A traveller in these far eastern lands gradually loses his impatience and finally ceases to care whether his train or tarantass goes fast or slowly, or does not go at all. Certainly we have been two hours at this station for no apparent reason.

We branch off here towards Manchuria. The point is called Karyinskaya, where not even a barking dog breaks the silence of the night,—the luminous Siberian night. There is no moon but the stars are very bright and the northern lights cast a pale glow off towards the polar sea.

It seemed for a time that we had been dropped and lost, as apparently the train had vanished into the night. But why worry? If so, it cannot be helped. My man and my luggage have gone, but again,—why worry? An hour later I go out to the little buffet, and there sits the man, while the luggage van has come back from somewhere.

So good-bye to Siberia! I shall always remember it as two vast stretches of sadly silent country,—limitless steppes, silent forests, dreary mountains, all leading up to that one great point of interest, that sea of ice,—frozen Baikal. Somewhat of the fascination which possesses Arctic explorers is understood by the winter passage of that lake, with its stretching snow fields, its black waters and fields of floating, plunging ice, and its grand air.

If inclined to suicide, I should avoid that passage of Baikal as I would Niagara, for like that cataract, the death cold waters of that awful channel fascinate and are intolerable.

This Trans-Baikal section is much better built

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than that west of Irkutsk. The road is well laid the ties are bedded in cement, and the rails are of heavier weight and properly joined. These engines have fine driving wheels, but no pilot or small wheels. They are wood-burners, each tender holds a crib which piles the wood as high as the smokestack. Much has been said and written about fraud and dishonesty in the building of this western section, but a discussion on that point has no place in a work of this description.

The main stream of travel at present is on to the town of Stretensk, which is on the Amur River, and is now the most lively centre of all the Trans-Baikal. Until the completion of the Manchurian line, the Amur formed the line of communication between the end of the Siberian road and the section running north from Vladivostok and it is still in use, especially during the stages of high water, but this river is even more changeable than our western streams, and changes are so sudden and so great that the steamboats get stuck for days on the numerous sand-bars.

The Amur territory lies to the north of the river of that name and in the south-eastern section of Siberia. It is somewhat larger than Sweden and is generally mountainous. The general course of the river is eastward until it reaches Khabarovsk, when it turns north-east to the Pacific. The navigation season covers but about one hundred and forty days. The rest of the year is given over to ice or lack of water. At times there is fifty feet of the latter, but a sudden drop reduces this to three or four feet. Vessels drawing five feet can navigate

from May to August. This is on that section from Stretensk to where the sea affects the river—thereafter it is very deep and is two or three versts in width. The passage of the river is never recommended to travellers. An Englishman and his family, passing up it last year, were some six weeks *en route*, most of the time being spent on sand-bars.

We shall see nothing of the Amur region and I must therefore turn again to our route.

May 6.

We are travelling south-east toward the Manchurian frontier, which will be reached to-night. The character of the country strongly resembles that on our Southern Pacific, between San Antonio and El Paso, limitless plains with no trees or bushes, and at this season brown and barren. There has been more heavy work upon the line yesterday and to-day than at any time before, some quite deep cuttings through rock. The specifications for this line were those used on level sections, except thirty versts of mountain work where the grade is .015. The cost of this branch, 324 versts in length, was twenty-eight million roubles, inclusive of rolling stock. It passes over the water-shed of the Ingoda and Aga, and through the Nerchinsh.





## CHAPTER XV

### HISTORY OF MANCHURIA AND THE RAILWAY

THE name Tartary has come to be used by Europeans for sections of Asia widely asunder, such as Manchuria and Turkestan. In fact, to the ordinary mortal, a Tartar is a man from any section of Asia north of the Great Wall. These Manchurians have probably a better right to the name than any other tribe of Asia. Europe first heard the name in 1241, when the Mongols spread terror through Christendom by their victory at Waldstadt. These Tartars of Manchuria are descendants of the nomad clans which inhabited the mountains between Korea and the Amur. They are wild marauders to this day, and travel, save when protected by a strong guard, is not safe, as they would much rather kill you than not.

Conquering China in 1644, the royal house of Manchuria mounted the throne of that country, and is still there.

There are, however, but few Manchus left amongst its many millions of people, but they are still the aristocracy of the land and from that comes the best portions of the Chinese army.

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The Manchurians are mentioned eleven hundred years before Christ. It was this nation which imposed the pigtail upon the Chinese, not, I believe, at first as a badge of servitude, but that the Manchus might be able to distinguish those of the Chinese who had joined their forces from those who still held out against them.

The origin of the name Manchu is as vague as that of most names in the East. It is impossible to give a history of Manchuria here. To those who desire to know more, I should suggest a perusal of James's *Long White Mountain*. However, this section of Asia now in the hands of Russia seems of unusual interest to the world at present, and I shall therefore have more to say about it than would seem at first justified in a work like this.

The remainder of this chapter is taken from the official guide of the Ministry of "Ways of Communication," so often quoted before.

Manchuria covers the north-eastern part of the Chinese Empire, lying approximately between  $53^{\circ}$  and  $38^{\circ}$  north latitude, and  $86.5^{\circ}$  and  $104.5^{\circ}$  east longitude from St. Petersburg. On the north-west, north, and west, it is bounded by the Russian Empire, on the west and south-west by Mongolia and China proper, and on the south and south-east by the Yellow Sea (the Gulfs of Korea and Liao-dun) and Korea.

This country derives its name from the tribe of Manchus, its predominant inhabitants. In China it is known under the name of Dun-san-shen, which literally means "three eastern provinces"; and holds a population of twenty-one millions.

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The superficial area of Manchuria comprises about six hundred thousand square versts, nearly equal to that of the Trans-Baikal territory and twice as large as Japan. The northern and greater portion is occupied by the Amur and Suifun basins, and contains the two provinces of Kheilun-shen and Tsin-lun-shen, traversed by the East Chinese Railway; the southern and smaller part, watered by the basins of the rivers Liso-khe and Yalun-tsian and the Yellow Sea, consists of the Shen-tsin-shen province and is traversed by the South Manchurian line.

In respect of the character of the surface, that of Northern Manchuria is mainly mountainous. On the west, running along the meridian, stretches the Great Khingan, forming a far-spreading mountain range extending from the frontier of China proper along the Amur for a distance of one thousand versts, with an average breadth of three hundred versts.

On the north, the Great Khingan borders on the Il-khuri-Alin mountain system, farther east it joins the spurs of the Little Khingan. The area eastwards of the Sungari and a great portion of the south are covered by the mountain system of Chan-bo-shan and its numerous branches. The highest point of this mountain system is the summit of Baiton-shan (eighteen hundred feet above sea level), presenting a gigantic column standing on the frontier of Manchuria and Korea, in the vicinity of which rise the three chief water arteries of the country: the Sungari, the Tumyn-ula, and the Yabitsin. The population of Manchuria and Korea particularly venerates this locality, consecrated to the forefathers of the Manchurian dynasty reigning in

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China. The Bai-tou-shan is an extinct volcano, whose crater is converted into a deep lake with a circumference of nine to ten versts, fringed with sharp-pointed peaks rising five hundred feet above sea level. The top of the mountain is covered with fragments of pumice and is of a white colour, which accounts for its name of White-headed Mountain. The local inhabitants designate the mountain lake by the name of Lun-van-tan or Lake of the Dragon King.

The western spur of the Chan-bo-shan system bears the name of Ku-le; between the Sungari and its tributary, the Mudan-tsian, stretches another far and wide spreading branch of the Chzhan-guan-tsain-lin. The eastern spurs occupy an extensive area between the rivers Tuman-ula, Suifun, and Ussuri. They all have here different names, and are cut at several points by the future railway line.

The character of the surface in Southern Manchuria is like that of the northern part; it is mainly covered with low ridges, divided into two groups by the broad valley of the Liao-khe, falling into the Liao-dun Gulf. All three mountain ridges, with the exception of those coming up to the western border of the Liao-khe valley, form part of the Chan-bo-shan system.

Southern Manchuria, known under the name of the Liao-dun Peninsula, having the form of a triangle, projects into the Yellow Sea. It is also covered with low mountains, whose summits do not exceed a height of three thousand to five thousand feet above sea level.

In spite of the inconsiderable elevation of the

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the Tuman-ula, navigable in its lower reaches, and the Suifun, navigable within the limits of Russian territory.

Southern Manchuria, subject to the influence of the Yellow Sea and to an abundant rainfall, is irrigated by numerous running waters. The largest of its rivers is the Lia-khe, falling into the Liao-dun Gulf and having a length of eight hundred versts; another important river bordering on Korea is the Yalu-tsian.

The mountainous character of the Liao-dun Peninsula, devoid of forests which could serve to direct the course of the running waters, prevents the formation of considerable water basins. All the rivers traversing the peninsula have a very inconsiderable length and an inconstant level, possessing the character of mountain streams.

As regards the Guan-dun or Kwang-tung Peninsula, the running water assumes there the form of mountain streams, which are irrepressible and full-flowing during the period of snow and rainfall, and dry up utterly during the other seasons. Upon the whole, the peninsula suffers from an absence of water, in spite of the abundance of rainfall. There are only a few wells, containing water of a bad quality, which can be employed for drink only after having been boiled or filtered.

Among the lake basins, the most important in Northern Manchuria are the Dalai-nor or Kulun with an extent of about one thousand square versts, the Buir-nor, somewhat inferior in size, and the Khanka, occupying about four thousand square versts.

The coast-line bounded by the Yellow Sea, flow-

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ing round the Liao-tung Peninsula, is comparatively even in outline, containing only on the south several deep bays on the eastern and western coasts.

The eastern shore comprises the bays of Liui-shun-kou (Port Arthur), Da-lian-van (Talienvan), and others of lesser importance. Liui-shun-kou Bay is over two versts long and about eleven and one half versts broad, being connected with the open sea by a long and narrow passage, of about a verst in length, with a breadth of one hundred and fifty to two hundred sazhens. At the entrance of this bay lies a wide roadstead suitable for the manœuvring of a great number of vessels, being well protected by the surrounding elevations from northerly and westerly winds, but very dangerous during southerly and easterly winds, making the water very rough. This roadstead is free of ice all the year round.

Situated forty-five versts north-east of Liui-shun-kou (Port Arthur), Da-lian-van Bay (Talienvan) is better protected from winds and from the violence of the waves, by elevated capes projecting into the sea, and for this reason has a great advantage over the southern bay. Da-lian-van, presenting a wide gulf, about twelve versts long and ten versts broad, with several bays, which never freeze, offers every convenience for the arrangement of a commercial port.

On the western shore of the Liao-dun Peninsula at its southern extremity are two bays, Pigeon and Louisa, with an anchorage for ships.

Farther north on the Liao-tung<sup>1</sup> coast, Company Bay is provided with a convenient anchorage for ships, sheltered as it is by numerous island groups.

The climate of Northern Manchuria is particularly

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<sup>1</sup> Liao-dun or Liao-tung.

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severe, and much colder than in other parts of the world lying within the same latitudes. In proximity to the northern part of the Sungari, the cold attains a maximum of  $-45^{\circ}$  R., whereas west of the Khingan it is often  $-50^{\circ}$  R.

Navigation on the Sungari is practicable only from the middle of April to the end of October. Winter lasts here for five months. The ice covering the Sungari attains a thickness of three feet. Farther west, near the source of the Argun, the duration of the winter is about six months. The spring is short: the greater part of the corn is already sown in April. The change from cold to warm weather is very sudden, accompanied by an extraordinarily rapid growth of the vegetation. The summer is very warm. The autumn commences early, the leaves fall at the beginning of September, and morning frosts begin at the end of this month.

The southerly and south-easterly winds, prevailing during the summer, bring a great amount of moisture turning into rain. In the valley of the Sungari and throughout the central part of Manchuria, the rainy season commences in the middle of June, and in the north-western portion in July. As a consequence of the northerly and north-westerly dry winds blowing in winter, the quantity of snow falling in Manchuria is not considerable, with the exception of the high ridges of the Great Khingan.

The climate of the southern part of Manchuria, and especially of the Liao-tung Peninsula, whose south-eastern coast is bounded by the warm Korean current, is considerably warmer. The extreme northern port which does not freeze is the Bitsy-vo.

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The average winter temperature at Port Arthur is 6°-7°.5 C. below zero. In the middle of March, the temperature rises considerably: a short spring precedes a warm summer, characterised by rain and thunderstorms. The best time of the year at Liao-tung is the autumn, which like the spring is very short.

The flora and fauna of Northern Manchuria, upon the whole, are like those of the Amur territory and the Ussuri region. The vegetation of Southern Manchuria, as well as its animal life, offers a mixture of North Chinese and Amur representatives, with species from South-eastern Mongolia, Korea, and Japan.

Together with forms common to the extreme north, such as the sable, the Bengal tiger, the most dangerous carnivore of Asia, occurs in Manchuria.

The population of Manchuria, according to approximate calculations for want of any official data, may be estimated at about fifteen millions (the Kheilun-tsian-shen province about two millions, Tsian-lun-shen seven millions, and Shen-tsin-shen six millions).

Among the most populous localities are the valley of the river Liao-khe, the peninsula of Liao-dun and the central part of the Sungari basin.

The population consists of Chinese, Manchus, Koreans, Daurs, Orocchens, Birars, Manegrs, Golds, Solons, Buriats, Chipchins, and Olots. The most numerous are the Chinese, who a long time since gradually colonised the country and founded the first towns in Southern Manchuria. The stream of Chinese emigrants was greatly increased from the

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middle of the past century by the addition of peasants and runaway criminals, gold-hunters, and gatherers of the bitter zhen-shen root (ginseng). Part of these outlanders became brigands called khunkhuz, who hold the peaceful inhabitants in awe. By this time, the Chinese occupy the whole of the Shen-tsin-shen province; they are scattered all over that of Tsin-lin-shen, and form a considerable percentage in the Kheilun-tsin-shen province. Owing to the energy of the Chinese population, the southern and part of the central portion of Manchuria now but slightly differ as regards culture from the adjoining Chinese countries.

The number of Manchus is given at six hundred thousand to seven hundred thousand, mainly settled in towns, where they enjoy a privileged position, being enrolled in the Manchu troops or serving as officials in various administrative institutions. The Manchus form part of the country population only in the two northern provinces, whereas they are totally absent therefrom in the southern Shen-tsin-shen province.

Among the other tribes, the most numerous are the Koreans, represented by fifty thousand.

The prevailing religion is Buddhism in its various forms.

The chief occupation of the permanent population of Manchuria is agriculture. Latterly, the Chinese Government has paid special care to its development, taking measures for the settlement of the free lands and for the expansion of the cultivated tracts. The cereals cultivated are wheat, oats, barley, various kinds of millet and buckwheat, maize and rice in

## Manchuria and the Railway 133

the southern districts. Among the forms of barley, the first place is occupied by India barley and Chinese gao-lin, which is used in making vodka.

Among the numerous leguminous plants, the da-dou, yielding oil, is extensively cultivated. Poppies are also sown in great quantity for the preparation of opium. Considerable tracts are occupied by plantations of tobacco, smoked by old and young, including the women. In the south of the Shensi-shen province, cotton is cultivated. The orchards are a great help to the population. Every Chinese hut is provided with a carefully kept kitchen garden, provided with the vegetables usually cultivated in the central zone of the European continent, with a profusion of onions, garlic, and pepper, pointing to the preference of the Chinese for vegetable food seasoned with strong spices.

In the southern portion of Manchuria, mainly in the Liao-dun Peninsula, the inhabitants occupy themselves with silk cultivation, the following towns being the chief centres of this industry: Siu-yan-chzhou, Tsin-chzhou-fu, Fu-chzhou. The silk is obtained from the cocoon of the *Bombyx pernyi*, feeding on oak-leaves.

Fruit-trees such as apple, pear, peach, plum, etc., occur throughout Manchuria, with the exception of the northern parts, but it is only in the south that these trees attain a fair growth. Vineyards are met with in the south of the country.

Among profitable industries may be mentioned the gathering of the zhen-shen root (zhinzeng or *Panax gyezeng*), which the Chinese consider as a panacea and a restorer of lost vigour.

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Cattle-raising is extensively practised in Manchuria. A great quantity of cattle is bred in the Kheilun-tsian-shen province, exclusively for agricultural purposes and for transport; the Chinese scarcely ever eat meat, and very rarely kill their cattle. Milk products likewise are not used by them for food. The horses of Northern Manchuria are famous. The camels are employed as pack-animals in this country. In the southern portion of the Liao-dun Peninsula, poorly provided with pastures, cattle breeding is less developed. The north of Manchuria exports droves of cattle for slaughter to the Amur region, sending them from the town of Khailar to Blagoveshchensk for further conveyance by the Amur.

Fishing is carried on in the localities watered by the Amur and the Sungari, but mostly along the sea-coast where fish, besides representing the chief food of the population, are also an article of export to other countries, after having been dried in the open air. Very good oysters are to be had in Dalian-van and Bitsy-vo.

Manufactures, on account of the small development of mining industry and the low stage of prosperity of the population, is exclusively represented by handicraft production, calculated to meet the daily needs of a hardly civilised population. The chief forms of industry are oil-pressing and brandy distilling. Oil is obtained from beans and peas by means of very primitive presses.

Chinese vodka is prepared mainly from millet (gao-lin).

Local cotton and silk are used in weaving stuffs.

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Trade in Manchuria is mainly concentrated in its southern ports and in the towns of the Shen-tsian-shen province. The larger part of European and American goods are imported through the ports of Intsy, Port Arthur, Bitsy-vo, and Da-gu-shan. A lively trade is also carried on through the frontier with the Amur province. Among European and American goods, the first place belongs to cotton stuffs, metals, woollen produce, and opium. Along the frontier line bordering the Amur territories, trade assumes a local character and consists in the barter of mainly animal products.

For purposes of administration, Manchuria is divided into three provinces each being subject to a special Tsian-Tsiun or Governor-General; thanks to the many peculiar customs always characterising a diversified population, the forms of administration are very complicated. The ancient Manchus with remains of their former military organisation, foreign Chinese having imported forms of administration from the central provinces of the Empire, wandering Mongols, Tungus trappers, and other nomad tribes with their primitive customs found a shelter in Manchuria and influence its administrative organisation. As stated by travellers in Manchuria, no living bond exists between the population and the administration, and their mutual intercourse is very often based on hatred of each other. Espionage and denunciation hold their sway everywhere, the raising of taxes is accomplished without any control, and justice is very irregularly administered. Complaints against the inertness of the police are heard on all sides, and thefts and robbery go unpunished. We have seen

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that the same state of affairs exists in Irkutsk. The workmen, as well as the Russian agents and engineers employed in the construction of the railway, are constantly attacked by bands of armed khunkhus.

Being leased to the Russian Government by a special agreement, concluded on the 15th of March, 1898, part of Liao-tung, the so-called Guan-tung Peninsula, received a separate administration by the statute of the 16th of August, 1899, sanctioned by the Emperor. The whole of the said territory inclusive of the islands forms the Kwantun province, whose administration being entrusted to the Commander of the Territorial Troops and of the Pacific Fleet, is subject to the Ministry of War. The centre of administration is Port Arthur. The following places are raised to the rank of towns in the territory : Port Arthur, Bitsy-vo, Tsin-chzhou and Dalni (Talien-van), constituting a separate governorship under the Ministry of Finance. The organisation of the new town of Dalni is left to the East Chinese Railway Company, under the chief direction of the Minister of Finance.

The unfavourable conditions and technical difficulties attending the projected construction of a railway line on the northern side of the Amur, uniting the Trans-Baikal Railway with the Ussuri line, evoked the project of a railway from the Trans-Baikal to Vladivostok by a more southern and direct route across Manchuria.

The choice of this route was in so far desirable as thus the railway passed through a more populous and fertile country, with a better climate than the Amur region. Including in the sphere of Russian

influence a rich and thickly settled country, the projected line moreover reduces the length of the Siberian main line and the distance run by transit goods, this also being a very important fact in connexion with the future competition between the Siberian Railway and the sea-routes to the Far East. The negotiations with the Chinese Government regarding the construction of the Siberian main line across Manchuria terminated in a concession for the construction and exploitation of the Manchurian Railway granted to the Russo-Chinese Bank.

According to the contract, concluded on the 27th of August, 1896, between the Chinese Government and the Russo-Chinese Bank, the East Chinese Railway Joint-Stock Company was organised within the confines of Manchuria for the construction and exploitation of the line.

The statutes of the East Chinese Railway Company, sanctioned on the 4th of December, 1896, stipulated that the construction of the line was to be started not later than the 16th of August, 1897, with a gauge corresponding to that of the Russian railways, *viz.*, five feet.

On the expiration of thirty-six years after the completion of the whole line and the opening of traffic, the Chinese Government possesses the right of redemption, repaying to the Company the capital and the debts contracted for the needs of the railway, with interest. After a period of eighty years, during which the line is to be exploited by the Company, the Chinese Government takes gratuitous possession of the railway and its plant.

The management of the affairs of the Company

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is entrusted to a board composed of a president and nine members. The president, acting as intermediary between the Company and the Chinese Government, is appointed by the latter, whereas the members are elected by all the shareholders.

The immediate management of affairs devolves on the vice-president chosen from among the members of the Company. The chief office is in St. Petersburg, with a branch in Pekin.

In January, 1897, by a decree of the Chinese Emperor, the Chinese statesman Sui-tsin-chen, former ambassador in St. Petersburg and Berlin, at present member of the Tsun-li-yamen, was named president of the board.

In the beginning of April, 1897, the first body of engineers and agents set forth for the Far East and, upon arriving at Vladivostok, under the immediate direction of the chief engineer began the surveys for the future railway and the preliminary works required for its construction. On the 16th of August of the same year, in presence of the Tsian-Tsien of Girin, the military governor of the Littoral territory and of the local Russian and Chinese officials, the work commenced near the Cossack village of Poltavskaya, situated in proximity to the boundary of the South Ussuri region. On undertaking the execution of the East Chinese Railway, the Company had in view the construction of a railway crossing Manchuria from west to east, *viz.*, from the boundary of the Trans-Baikal to that of the South Ussuri region. After the convention between Russia and China regarding the cession of Port Arthur and Da-lian-van to Russia for a twenty-five-years' lease was signed

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in Pekin on the 15th of March, 1898, and a supplementary protocol in St. Petersburg on the 15th of April of the same year, the Imperial Chinese Government granted the Company permission to continue the construction of the railway from one of the stations of the Manchurian main line to Da-lian-van and Port Arthur, with the right of exploitation of the branch, which received the name of South Manchurian branch of the East Chinese Railway.

Upon the conclusion of this treaty, the Company began directly to make surveys and commenced the construction of the South Manchurian line. As a result of repeated surveys, the following directions were adopted for the main route and its branches.

Crossing the Trans-Baikal frontier at the station of Sibir on the Trans-Baikal Railway and entering into the confines of the Chinese Empire at the village of Nagadan near Lake Dalai-nor, the main line reaches the town of Khailar (population, three thousand). Farther on, it runs a distance of three hundred versts along an elevated plateau and ascends to the Great Khingan ridge and then descends again to the valley of the river Nonni, crossing it within fifteen versts to the south of the town of Tsitsikar (population, seventy thousand). Within thirty versts of the town of Khulinchen (population, seventy thousand), the line crosses the river Sungari near the settlement of Kharbin, which is the headquarters of the central department for the construction of the East Chinese Railway, and proceeds towards the town of Azhekhe (population, forty thousand). At the 340th verst, south-east of the Sungari, after having crossed the river Mudan-tsian, the line enters

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a mountainous country and follows it to the frontier of the Ussuri region.

On the west, the East Chinese and the Russian railways are connected by the branch of the Trans-Baikal line, serving as link between the East Chinese Railway and the Siberian line, the station Kaidalovo being the point of junction. On the east, the East Chinese Railway joins the Nikolsk branch of the Ussuri line.

The South Manchurian branch, leaving the main track after crossing the Sungari at the settlement of Kharbin, runs to the south through the towns of Kuan-chen-tsy, Chan-tu-fu, Mukden (population, twenty thousand), Inkou (population, seventy thousand), to Port Arthur (population, twenty thousand), connected by a short branch line (sixteen versts) with Da-lian-van, which has received the name of Dalni.

Following this direction, the main line and the southern branch of the East Chinese Railway run through the whole of Manchuria from the Trans-Baikal boundary to the Ussuri region and southwards to the extremity of the Liao-dun Peninsula, passing on the way through most populous localities suitable for agriculture. The length of the main line is estimated at 1440 versts the South Manchurian line, 980 versts, and the total length of the whole East Chinese Railway, 2420 versts.

The materials required for the main line upon reaching Vladivostok are forwarded by the Ussuri Railway to the station of Khabarovsk whence, by means of steamers belonging to the Company (which has organised navigation on the river for want of

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any other convenient means of communication in Manchuria), they are taken up the Sungari to Kharbin for further distribution along the line. The materials which are destined for the South Manchurian line are transported to Port Arthur in sea-going steamers. Part of the railway material is carried by shallow-draught vessels to Port Inkou, whence it is forwarded by a temporary branch line to its further destination.

For purposes of administration, the East Chinese Railway is divided into three: the eastern, western, and southern divisions, comprising twenty-two sections.

The managers of these divisions are under the immediate control of the head engineer. The central department for the construction of the line, including the chancery, the book-keeping, technical, and machinery departments, is situated in Kharbin. The department for steamship navigation on the rivers has its headquarters in Vladivostok.

Besides the above-mentioned persons, upwards of one hundred and fifty railway and technical engineers are employed on the construction of the East Chinese Railway.

With a view to preserve the health of all those who are employed on the works throughout the line, a medical inspection, consisting of twenty-four physicians and seventy-five assistant surgeons, has been organised and entrusted to the direction of the head doctor.

Not only the higher employees, but also the lower agents, surveyors, blacksmiths, locksmiths, and other artisans, come from Russia and are carried to

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their point of destination by the steamers of the Volunteer Fleet, taking regularly every voyage an average of forty agents of the Company.

The contingent of common workmen consists mainly of Chinese. By this time, about one hundred thousand Chinese workmen are employed on the construction of the line.

With a view to supply the employees with provisions and articles indispensable to Europeans, the Company established in Kharbin special stores for this purpose.

Taking into consideration the great importance which the commercial port Dalni will acquire for the East Chinese Railway as its terminus, the Company is also entrusted with the construction and exploitation of this post.

Foreseeing that after the construction of the commercial port Dalni, an industrial population consisting of different nations will be attracted to it and give it the character of a town, and with a view to preserve the unity of the technical administration regarding the construction of both port and town, the Company was also entrusted with the organisation of the town in Dalni under the chief direction of the Minister of Finance.

The chief constructor of the port and town is railway engineer Sakharov who, accompanied by his assistants, is already at his post.

In order to secure the regular transport of freights, materials, and workmen required for the construction of the East Chinese Railway, and to establish in the future a regular and quick transport for passengers and goods carried from Russia and Western Europe

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to the Far East and back, the Company of the East Chinese Railway obtained the right to establish a special ocean-steamship navigation in the Far East. The increase of the quantity of goods conveyed by the railway being in accordance with the interests of the Ocean Steamship Company, the latter will as soon as its fleet is sufficiently developed, contribute also to the export of Russian goods from the Litoral territory to China, Japan, and Korea. Captain A. N. Bostelman, residing in Port Arthur, is director of the Ocean Steamship Navigation Co.; its board is also located there.

In 1899 voyages were accomplished by six steamers belonging to the Company, three freight steamers, two goods and passenger, and one passenger steamer. The Company arranges landing-stages and stores at the places visited by the steamers. By this time it owns wharves at Vladivostok, Port Arthur, Dalni, Chifu, Port Inkou, and in the near future contemplates having them at Possiet, Kastri, Petropavlovsk, and Shanghai; coal-stores exist at Port Arthur, Chifu, and Nagasaki. Agencies have been opened at Vladivostok, Nikolaevsk (on the Amur), Due (in Sakhalin), Nagasaki, Chifu, Niuchwan, Shanghai, and Chemulpo; very soon their number will be increased by the opening of fresh agencies in Petropavlovsk, Possiet, Tintsin, Hong-kong, Futsan, and Khakodate. The agents in nearly all the ports are Russians.

In 1900, the commercial fleet belonging to the Company will be enlarged by the addition of two steamers (two hundred feet in length), constructed in Shanghai and destined to cruise on the Sea of

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Okhotsk; high-speed steamers built in England and Germany for cruises from Port Arthur and Dalni on the waters of the Pacific Ocean are to be completed by the same time.

By the completion of the East Chinese Railway, with its branches to the Trans-Baikal and Ussuri lines, and the continuation of the South Manchurian Railway to Port Arthur and the town of Dalni, the Imperial Will proclaimed by the rescript of the 17th of March, 1891, commanding the construction of a continuous railway line through Siberia to the coast of the Pacific Ocean, has been fulfilled.





## CHAPTER XVI

### THROUGH MANCHURIA

Wednesday, May 7, 1902.

MANCHURIA was passed last night, or rather we stopped there all night, and started again this morning at nine on a train of freight, third, and second class—no first. We did not change cars, but our English friends were obliged to, and have had rather a hard time of it, though everything is satisfactory now. Mrs. B—— was promised if she came with her husband that she should have a comfortable carriage through Manchuria—this from a high official who declared that his word was law. When we reached there last night, after a wait of two hours in a most wretched hovel of a station, they were shown into a comfortable carriage, and all things were serene apparently, but scarcely were they settled when they were bundled out and put into a car of a most uncomfortable description—two or three hard benches, and nothing more,—a waggon used by officers in this section, but for a lady scarcely to be tolerated for an eight-day journey. Poor woman! I was indeed sorry for her. She was so distressed, and had not undressed all night. Still, go on she

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must, or go back, for there was no sign of a hotel, and the dirty waiting-room crowded with second-class passengers and their luggage, dogs, and fleas was not to be considered for an instant. In sheer despair she hunted out the chief man of the line before the train started. He spoke English, and listened most politely to all she had to say, and then regretted the state of affairs, but, "We have no other carriage." There she had him, as she had been in the other. He surrendered at discretion, and now she is comfortably fixed and trailing along behind us.

One American woman reaching here with her mother, a lady of some seventy-five years of age, was forced to travel in a third-class car, or go with a lot of convicts. There was nothing else to be had. These third-class over here are mere wooden boxcars with benches. I should have been forced to use such but for the courtesy of the French Consul. Thanks to him, I am most comfortably fixed, and so we move onward over the last division of the Siberian Railway.

So far as the scene is concerned, one might be upon the plains of Teheran. This is evidently but a temporary track, as another is being built upon quite an embankment. It will be quite a year before this section will be open to travel.

The character of the people has entirely changed. There are no Russians save those connected with the train. The Manchurians are all around us, and a very tough lot. At every stopping-point—there are no stations—there is a guard of Cossacks. But even this far-off corner of the earth is not too remote for the gypsies. There is a whole band of them here.

The women have their hair in two long plaits, and into each plait large silver coins are fastened, while a gold piece forms the earring. They, of course, demand to tell our fortunes, but are not gratified. At the desolate post of Kahrkohns, we find the first trace of America in some California canned fruit, and very acceptable it is. One can at any time buy candies, and candied fruit and brandy, but in this little log hut we find, for the first time since we started, things that we really want, *i. e.*, the necessaries of life—canned beef and bacon, and fruit, etc., all from home, which seems much nearer in consequence.

All the land around is a howling desert of sand, but this most northern post of American trade in Manchuria is a bright spot for us at least. How often I have turned with weary distaste from the fly-specked candies and stale stuff, and longed for a can of American peaches,—and here they are. You may have my dress coat, but not this can of peaches.

This section of Manchuria would certainly seem too utterly barren to be of any service to man. There are no signs of life save those connected with this railroad, still in construction. Every water-tank is guarded, and I notice when we get down from our car that the guards at once draw near to us, yet these northern Celestials appear on the whole friendly, and are flying around in all directions, swathed in furs, and mounted on shaggy horses. There are varying reports as to the number of days it will take us to reach Port Arthur. Yesterday it was six, to-day it is nine. As for the stops, they grow longer and longer; one half-hour is the minimum. One dare not object, the engineer having

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stated that he would go when he got ready, and we fear an objection would make that "not at all." However, it is rather jolly jogging along like this.

Russia is sending some two hundred thousand of her agricultural population yearly to Eastern Siberia.

We are still on the same high, barren plateau, but the mountains are in view, and some more cuttings have already been passed. The Manchurian road was built under a concession from China to the Russo-Chinese Bank and the rails were manufactured in Maryland.

These engines are wood-burners. The tenders each hold a high crib, which piles the wood level with the top of the smokestack, and every station is a woodyard, the most of the fuel being from the birch-tree.

At Irektz we begin to ascend the grades of the Khingan Mountains—desolate hills as yet, covered with birch forests, reaching an elevation of 3400 arshins (an arshin is about two feet three inches)—something over eight thousand feet, or about the height of Mt. Washington; but this height is obtained by a gradual rise of a thousand miles from tide-water. At Khingan on the mountains we find large coal-mines.

This is a mixed train, of freight mostly, and we are shoved up. There is no engine in front. The workers are all Manchurians, and a jolly lot. Just now I made a remark to one about "washee shirts," and his grin extended all around his head. One of them, begging, just now said that he had a wife with a sore throat, and wants to go back to his mother's grave. "Just as soon leave the wife as not." Came

THE DESOLATE POST OF KAHRKHOINS, MANCHURIA.



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with the railway, and for all him "the railway might have stayed away."

Khingan. The descent of the mountain to Saltambo is effected by means of several long switchbacks. Two engines, one at either end of the train, are employed, so we are never pushed but always hauled, the rear engine being detached each time.

The scenery is at no point more than ordinary. We should come to some signs of spring on the other side of the mountains, it has been midwinter so far, from Petersburg on, yet this is the 9th of our May.

Don't neglect to go to the English book-store in Petersburg and lay in a big store of books. You cannot stand the journey otherwise. Especially in the hours between six and ten at night does the time hang heavily without books.

In some of them you may find amusing statements concerning Americans, all the more so since they come from educated people who should know better. The following are some samples:

"By blood the American of to-day is a strange mixture of old world races—European, Asiatic, and African."

"The native American is a compound of English, Irish, German, Spanish, African, Indian, and *Chinese* blood."

"The American woman when young is very pretty, but rapidly fades away, and is an old woman at thirty. She has only one child, or at the most, two."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Emigrant and Sportsman in Canada*, by John J. Rowan, pp. 428 and 429. Edw. Stanford, 55 Charing Cross.

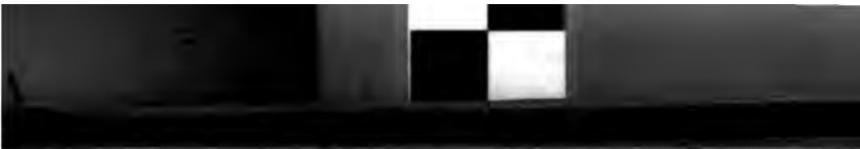
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Comment is unnecessary.

It is at all times interesting to watch the construction of great works, the carrying out of important enterprises. From a scenic standpoint, save the Baikal, nothing could be more monotonous than this Siberian Railway to the ordinary traveller, to the thousands for whom these wild steppes and forests are dumb, yet to many, great is the interest in the railway, in the daily contemplation of the long ribbons of iron as they stretch away behind the train, or reach out before it in the expectation of what is to come, and of the final moment when the waters of the Pacific Ocean will wash the eastern end of the line—all this is of intense interest. All the equipment is to be inspected, and a satisfaction derived when it is found that much for the eastern half comes from our own land.

This wild nature and these desolate plains have a decided fascination for me, but I am also greatly interested in all the rest, and I continually recall to mind the similar enterprises in our own land.

While my father was building the Kansas Pacific Railway it was his custom to send his sons from the East in his private car, which on arrival at the end of track was attached to the construction train, and there we passed many happy vacation months in summer, an experience never to be forgotten, and never in this world repeated by man. How it all comes back to me! Day after day the vast plains rising to the horizon like a bowl, now silent as eternity, now full of the rushing of storm life, in its centre the crawling construction train, leaving its streaks of iron behind it, and ever reach-



THE GIPSY FORTUNE-TELLER.

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ing out mile by mile in front—a moving town, noisy and humming with the work of construction, guarded by both cavalry and infantry from the hordes of savages whose signals were often seen ascending straight upward in a thin spiral of smoke no matter how windy the day, whose deadly arrows sent so many of the men to their long home. Buffalo Bill was one of the scouts. Custer of the yellow hair was there in full life and vigour, with no thought of the fatal Little Big Horn, to cloud his face or smother his gay laughter. Almost daily the plains were darkened by thousands of passing buffaloes lumbering along, or antelopes drifting like a swiftly passing white cloud, and above all and around all, that wondrous fresh, sparkling, life-giving air, pure and fresh from the hand of God, to be found nowhere on earth save in our Western land,—on our Western plains,—green in the early summer, spangled by many flowers, and arched by a fair blue sky; golden brown as the summer advanced, and the sky turned to a deeper blue; ever changing in lights and shadows with the passing clouds, fascinating always.

And who that has witnessed them can ever forget the indescribable glory of the sunsets? the very life of the train seemed to pause in admiration and sink to rest, wonderingly. Then came the shadowy twilight with the skimming of many bats and twittering of birds, and as the moon rose, casting her river of splendour over all, the mournful howl of the grey wolf mingled with the short barking chorus of the coyote.

How different the impression produced in Siberia!

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yet the setting is not unlike. The same barren, brown plains, which here give no sign of greenness, though this is the middle of May; the same stretching ribbons of iron before and behind, but of wild life there is none either of man or beast. Certainly one cannot call these Manchurians savages, and surely the wretched specimens one sees possess none of the stalking dignity of our painted Indians, who would never condescend to work as these do. It may be a fancy, but this very air is different. You cannot call this otherwise than healthy, but it does not hold the vitality that that did and does. Taking it all in all, the stage settings are so different that no comparison can be made. That was a new land with its wild game and wilder men. This holds a people who laugh at our civilisation as too youthful to be considered. Those great works at home, and this in the Russian Empire have had and will have more important influence upon the development of the world than any other ever undertaken. It is claimed, and I fancy with justness and truth, that the result here is already wonderful, though the road is not yet open, and as for our own land there can be no doubt thereof. Before the opening of the Pacific main line in 1868 our coasts were as far asunder in every respect as Europe and America. Men in California spoke of the East as "the States," as though they knew of them, but were scarce part thereof, and it appeared to the casual observer that if a division of the nation ever occurred, it would be between the East and the West, not the North and South. How different now! The numerous Pacific railways have welded our people and our land together in a mass

too solid ever to be disrupted, and the Spanish War has demonstrated to the world that there is no longer a North and South.

I doubt, however, if the building of the Siberian road can consolidate this Empire. It is well that the Russian is the controlling element, as they are half Oriental, and know best how to do it. But surely a homogeneous nation is not possible which is composed of Sarts, Kirgiz, Persians, Georgians, Tartars, Kourghans, Manchurians, Chinese, the wild tribes of the Caucasus, and the hordes of the Turkoman.

We had none to deal with save the Indians, and they are fast vanishing. True, we have the negroes, but I do not think they will give America much trouble in the years to come. By the Spanish War we have added other races, but they are and will ever remain separated from us by many seas. We may send to them and govern them, but they will certainly never come to us.

Russia is doing her best to populate these vast reaches by her own people, and yearly sends hundreds of thousands out here. Let us hope she will succeed. If so, this railroad and the great and good Tsar Alexander III., the man who started the vast work, will be the means to that success.

Friday.

We have left the mountains behind us, and are again slowly moving across a barren brown plateau. Since we left Manchuria there has been nothing like a town to be seen, only the few buildings—and sometimes not even those—necessary for the use of the road.

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Our days pass pleasantly, in reading or hanging out of the windows. The train makes frequent stoppages at just nothing at all, but always remains at least a half-hour, so that we have plenty of exercise tramping around, generally in search of a buffet, which you may discover under any sort of a cover: sometimes a mud mound, with a hole for a door, sometimes a log cabin, and in our fear that we may not get enough we eat too much.

Here is the construction train, for, though open to traffic, the road is far from completion in all ways. Our two cars and two second class hold all the passengers, some eight all told. The remainder of the train consists of freight cars full of Chinamen at work on the line.

In Tsitsikar, at a wretched little mud plaster hut, we find some hot soup and a chop, also some coffee, all of which, after our days in lunch baskets, taste very pleasant.

The Nonni River is crossed near Tsitsikar by a fine steel bridge. This is our first river without ice. The town is fifteen versts north and has seventy thousand inhabitants. This river Nonni is one of the main tributaries of the Sungari, which in turn is the main branch of the Amur.

At the railway station for Tsitsikar (pronounced Chitz-e-kar) the Russians are building a substantial town of heavy log houses, which does not look much like an evacuation of Manchuria.

On each side of the river we have made stops of two hours each.

A RAILWAY STATION IN MANCHURIA.



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## CHAPTER XVII

### THROUGH HARBIN AND MUKDEN

May 10.

A HEAVY rain all night and the first during the journey,—a sure sign of a vanished winter. This morning, as we crawl through Mongolia, the plains have taken on a faint green tinge in places. Mongolians wearing quaint pointed caps are racing round on shaggy little horses. These stations and other railway buildings are built of brick. Just west of the Sungari River and outside of Harbin we are delayed for hours by something,—they say an engine off the track. There are a lot of Chinese cavalry soldiers here in gaudy red and blue uniforms, each carrying a Mauser which has a permit from the Russian Government pasted on its stock.

Everything hereabouts on the river is truly Manchurian,—nothing Russian. The boats are quaintly shaped and bear strange looking sails. But when we have crossed a fine bridge and entered the town, it is altogether Russian. In fact, it is one of the most important military stations in the East, and is situated on the road to Vladivostok, just where the Port Arthur line turns directly south. The station town

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is called Sungari; the town of Harbin, or Karbin, is ten versts away.

As we are switched around the yards here, I notice a very familiar sound to the locomotive, which I find is one from the Baldwin Works in Philadelphia—poor specimens of American engines; certainly not such as the Baldwin Works are in the habit of turning out.

All the buildings at this point are of brick with corrugated iron roof and one-storied.

The state of society seems even worse at this military post of Harbin than at Irkutsk. There were seven throats cut here last night, and now, as a member of the Russo-Chinese Bank expressed it, the town hopes for quiet for a season. We have had both a stormy and amusing time since reaching this place. Our cars were, at Irkutsk and Manchuria, assured to us through to Port Arthur, and consequently we had started to keep house for two weeks, but on reaching here were told that we must change, but that quarters as good if not better would be provided; that the servants of the Company would make the change with no trouble to ourselves.

So it was done. But when the ladies entered the new cars, their disgust was intense upon finding no such accommodations as those they had just left, and they were nothing extraordinary. The tempest raged loud and high and came near wrecking the ship. They moved *en masse* upon the authorities, flourished letters from almost all the powers that be, saving alone the Tsar,—told of exalted positions, civil and military, conferred by two great nations; called me a Congressman (for that I shall never for-

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give them); threatened to return at once to St. Petersburg, and tell the Tsar, and said that I would tell President Roosevelt—which I promised, for my life's sake, to do—shouted in English, French, German, Russian, and Chinese. The names of Witte and Kourapatkin were tossed at the officials like tennis balls, but all to no effect. They bowed and smiled, and saluted, but finally when one of us threw his military title once too often into the teeth of the head man, said personage flared up and shouted that he did not care for all the combined officers and ministers of all the nations, he would do as his chief directed.

All the time I sat by and made both sides very indignant by laughing. After all, we cannot complain; this line is not open to traffic,—it will be next year,—and we are only allowed by sufferance to pass over it. They have but very few cars and of course not good ones. What their reasons were for not sending ours through I know not, but certainly they must have been of weight, or they would not have changed us, much less run the risk of such an attack. The Chinese War was as nothing to it. The cars we are transferred to might be very much worse. However, that does not quiet matters, and the last thing they hear from one of the ladies is to the effect that when she gets back to Petersburg she will tell Kourapatkin that his name in Manchuria is worth no more than waste paper. "He assured me that I had only to mention the name of the Minister of War and all things would at once be at my disposal. Now look at us!"

At that moment we were seated in the buffet dis-

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cussing a fair dinner, and drinking innumerable cups of tea. Russian officers in all the glory of gay uniforms sat around and stared at her, and there was a dog-fight under the table. Madame, the French lady, has a small fox terrier which bites everything except its food. An officer having entered, followed by two other dogs, the fight was on at once. Off to one side stood the counter with its inevitable candelabra, its bottles of wine, sweet cakes, candies, dishes of raw fish, and its steaming samovar. The room was low and rough, but the only safe place thereabouts for us until we were in our cars, which were brought just opposite the door.

In the larger waiting-room outside there were hundreds of Chinese and Manchurians, but few Russians, save soldiers and police. Russia still has some forty thousand men in Manchuria, but "will reduce the number this year." (?) I am sorry to learn it and trust the Government of the Tsar will, for the sake of the world at large, hold on as tightly as England has to Egypt, even though the rest of the world may lose some trade thereby. This has been a section of trouble,—the Boxers were all around here, and besieged this very town, which was relieved by Russia after much trouble. We are informed that the railway track is still apt to be torn up, now and then, but we shall go on all the same. It is difficult to realise that those jolly, smiling beggars, who gather laughing and chatting around the train, can turn to such demons as the late war developed. Just now one of them dropped a box of eggs, to the intense amusement of a laughing, jeering throng. It must have meant a serious loss to him.



THE SUNGARI RIVER, MANCHURIA.

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These Chinese can live well on three and a half cents per day,—live and support a family thereon. I met one in the station last night who spoke excellent English. He had three wives and three sets of children, forming what appeared to the casual observer a very happy family.

It would appear that with stops of from one half to two hours, there is no necessity for any one getting left, yet scarce a station is passed that one or two do not have to run for the departing train; generally the station police haul them off, and they must sit around for twenty-four hours, as there is at present but one train—mixed—per day. Probably the fact of these long stops is to blame. These people seem to think that a train and to travel means to sit all day over their tea, and when the train actually pulls out and away, they are too astonished to move.

Sunday, May 11th.

We cross another large branch of the Sungari early in the morning. As we go south the evidences of spring increase, cherry-trees are in bloom, while there is a faint tinge of green to the earth which for the first time seems of a good rich quality. At every station and at points along the line there are gardens and all the stations now are of brick.

Two Chinamen just now knocked at the door of our car and I opened it. Seeing in their hands pieces of red paper, which promptly and strongly recalled Fourth of July to my mind, I told them that we did not desire any firecrackers. One, whom I discovered to be the one who spoke English and of whom I have already made mention, laughed heartily

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and replied that that was not their business, and that those papers were their cards. They had come to call on the French Consul and myself. That one's name is John, and he is the manager of the Harbin Telegraph Co. The other, Sheng, is commander-in-chief of Tonewangho.

During the Boxer troubles the latter was ordered by telegraph from Pekin to attack and slaughter all foreigners in Harbin. He replied that he had no men, guns, or ammunition, and even if he had possessed them he would think many times before attempting such a move. Promptly came a telegram that by royal decree he was deposed and condemned to lose his head. To this he replied, "Thank you," and promptly moved among the foreigners.

Harbin was besieged for two months by six thousand Boxers, and successfully defended by one hundred and fifty foreigners until the Russians came up, which they did from three directions, and the Boxers melted away like the mists of the morning.

Sheng is now considered by the Pekin authorities to have shown great discrimination and is *en route* to that city. In his place, I should not venture within reach of the Empress. She may bow and cringe to the foreign powers there now, but her nails, hidden in her sleeves, are growing sharper daily, and she never forgets.

These people are much more interesting than the Russian peasants. Amusement among the latter if not unknown, is of the saddest, dreariest kind, but these people frolic like children. The crowds at the stations number some hundreds always, and they are bent on fun. Just now there were two

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very clever contortionists, affording the people much sport.

To-day our train is very long; aside from our car and that of Colonel B——, there are two second class, and all the rest, some thirty in number, are ordinary freight cars, but the freight is human. They are crowded with Chinese, and as many as possible sit with their legs hanging out of the doors.

To-day is spring-like and balmy, and the first day we have been able to have our windows open.

Evidently human labour is cheaper than machinery in Manchuria. At several points there have been large mills or rather yards, but all hand labour.

There are two saw-mills up in the mountains, but none down south of Harbin. We have left the basin of the Amur and are in that of the Toylenho.

At Kundolin Sunday evening we reach the end of the southern section of the Manchurian Railway. This portion has been running for two years, hence there is something like a regular service over it and we may hope to get on apace.

We lay at Kundolin until 1 A.M., fortunately being allowed to retain our cars, as I think another packing and transfer, with its inevitable storm of words, would have exhausted what is left of us or of our patience. One may laugh at the little discomforts of a trip like this after they are over, but when they are piled up for three weeks—and it will be just three weeks—the last one becomes like unto the famous straw. This long, long ride is nearly ended. During its progress we have been completely cut off from all news of the great outer world. The few Russian papers that are printed tell little

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or nothing. In the voyage from San Francisco to New Zealand, or Australia to England, one is not more isolated than in Siberia and on this route.

To begin with, the Russians do not in the least care what goes on in the outer world, save in so far as it directly affects their Empire. Secondly, it is the policy of this Government that her people be treated as children, not grown men and women,—that they should be told very little of anything,—kept in general ignorance of everything save such as the powers desire them to know. Take for instance the affairs of this railway. Surely it is a great national undertaking in which every man in Russia should be interested, and whose progress the papers should chronicle. Yet what does one find? Even in the railway office of St. Petersburg absolute ignorance of all things concerning it. The daily press makes no mention of it; no information is to be obtained from them. I was informed by a man, who, in our land, would be called a general ticket agent, and who seemed to speak with authority, that I should have twenty-five hundred versts in the tarantass. That was absolutely untrue. We have, as you have seen, come direct, with but two changes of carriages. The Chief of Police in Irkutsk endeavoured to deter us from starting, stating that the ice on the Baikal was not passable, that we should be forced to return to Irkutsk. (Baikal is but three hours beyond Irkutsk.) That statement was absolutely untrue, arising, of course, from ignorance not from any desire to be untruthful. You have seen that we passed the Baikal with no trouble, and the firm blue ice three feet in thickness and with no



ACROBATS BY THE WAY.





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signs of rottenness, certainly looked as though it would have held a train of cars.

It is very easy to give advice to another, to see how well we ourselves could do what they flounder so sadly in doing, but would not a greater freedom for the press do more to assist the progress of this vast Empire than anything else could possibly accomplish? I do not refer to the political questions,—Russia is the best judge of what she desires in that matter,—but information about such things as this railway, general knowledge of all that belongs to the life of the nation, by the nation, and for the nation. To judge by the furnished statistics of every town of any size, Russia would shame all other nations by the work she is doing for the education of her people, yet one cannot understand why one sees no results therefrom. It is twenty years since I first visited the Empire, and in that time I have crossed her territories in all directions, from Constantinople to Kashgar, from Teheran to Finland, from Petersburg to Port Arthur and Pekin. Twenty years should have reared another and an enlightened generation if all these recorded schools and other institutions be of any worth. Yet I can see no improvement in the general information or intelligence of the people, and the worst of it is that they appear indifferent to their ignorance. Would it have been possible at any time during the construction of our Pacific roads to have found such a state of ignorance concerning those undertakings as we have found about this road at this time? Every ticket agent on those roads and throughout the whole land could have told the traveller just how matters stood, but in Russia from

start to finish the answer is "No," or, "I do not know." Often they will not wait to hear the question, being apparently afraid to give information.

What will raise the cloud from Russia? The censorship of all published matter at present is something appalling to contemplate, and costs the Government large sums of money. Every book that enters the Empire must be read by a censor, likewise every paper or bit of printed matter. Imagine the task! The post-bags to the various embassies generally enter unopened, and I have been curious enough to examine—in the London *Times*, for instance—articles that I have noticed as being blotted out by the censors from the editions which came to the hotel. Several times these articles contained nothing of the slightest importance, and often absolutely nothing relating to the Russians or their Government, all of which leads one to believe that the censors holding lucrative posts do not mean to lose them by allowing the Government to imagine that there is no longer a necessity therefor. On the other hand, it is claimed that by these censors the public of Russia is saved the infliction of yellow journalism, and that slanders and scandals cannot creep into the press as they do with us.

Personally I like the Russians very much. They have from start to finish been very polite and friendly to me, and a Russian officer is always a charming man to meet with. They like Americans, and they show it.

Surely I may be pardoned if I become a little personal concerning one belonging to our dead hero, General Grant, and I think there are many who will

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be glad to know that his granddaughter is very happy in this far-off land. Her husband is a charming fellow, devoted to his Tsar and his profession—of course he is a soldier, but over all this he is a devoted husband and father, while their boy seems as sturdy as his great-grandsire. They live beautifully, and are general favourites in St. Petersburg, as indeed all our American women are. He has a very pleasing younger brother, a sailor lad, whose English tumbles all over itself.

The wife of our military attaché has quite taken the town by storm. At her first court ball she surprised every one by dancing the famous mazurka, and doing so quite as well as any of the Russians, who would not believe that she had never attempted it before.

KUNDOLIN, May 13th.

Our last full day witnesses the first downpour of rain, and we pass our first large cities in Manchuria.

Mukden. It is about three hundred miles north of Port Arthur, and possesses some two hundred thousand inhabitants. It is the capital and royal city of Manchuria, the ancient burial-place of the rulers, and lies in the southern section of the country on a branch of the river Liao and some four hundred miles north-east of Pekin. It is some twenty miles from the railway station and one must be well guarded *en route* to and from. Since my visit last spring the road has been run up to the town.

Like all Chinese cities Mukden is walled in,—in fact, doubly walled, as its inner town is protected by one of stone, which is thirty-five feet high and

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fifteen broad at the top. This wall is pierced by eight gates with double archways. The suburbs are surrounded by a wall of mud.

Mukden's streets are wide and clean for a Chinese town, and it has well-built shops and seems a busy place.

As at Pekin, its palace stands in the centre of the inner city, and is protected by its own wall.

Four miles east of this ancient city is the tomb of the founder of the Manchu dynasty, Nurachu. The sepulchre itself forms a great mound built up over the coffin. In front of this stands a funeral hall, the whole being surrounded by a high wall pierced by one grand gateway which holds three arched portals. The avenue of approach is spanned by two lofty and elaborate arches of carved stone, the bases of their columns resting upon carved likenesses of frogs. There are also two pillars each with a couchant lion on the top and finally two massive couchant lions guard the portal.





## CHAPTER XVIII

### DALNEY AND PORT ARTHUR

ARE not the faces of people affected by the characteristics of the land they dwell in? Siberia is vast and flat and monotonous, and the faces of her people blanks. All those who remember China will recall the fantastic character of her mountains, something like tossing, dancing, fantastic waves, congealed into brown earth and rocks, while the faces of her laughing, jabbering people seem in accord therewith.

Southern Manchuria smiles a vast garden after the barren lands we have passed through. The soil is rich, and the people hard at work with the spring planting. We have left the land of wood. All the houses are either of stone or the grey brick so peculiar to China. One rarely sees red brick. The roofs are of tiling.

I find this end of the line very far from completion. Everything has been of a temporary character, but the company is hard at work all the time. We have just crossed the Taidzu-ho River on a temporary bridge, but piles for the permanent structure are being put in. The structure itself stands in completed spans on the bank.

Tuesday, May 15th.

Our last morning of the journey. We shall reach Port Arthur at 1 P.M.,—three weeks, lacking, according to difference in time, twelve hours out from St. Petersburg,—from the frozen Gulf of Finland to the laughing blue waters of the Gulf of Liao-tung or the Yellow Sea.

I noticed last night that there was much switching of our car, and this morning discovered our John Chinaman strutting around with added importance. It seems he became disgusted with the numerous attempts by passengers at passing through: as we were in the centre of the train that was not surprising. However, it disturbed John's sleep, so he went to the station master and told him we were mandarins of high degree in our own countries and carried much of value with us, which he would not be responsible for unless our car was removed to the end of the train, hence all that midnight switching accompanied by a delay of half an hour. I can not say exactly what my feelings were towards John this morning, as the switching was accompanied by such banging and jolting that sleep for me was impossible, all of which was a mere matter of detail to John, as he secured his own repose.

Our route lies this morning down the east coast of the Gulf of Liao-tung, whose waters were in view when I awakened. Truly a very welcome sight. One does not feel the fatigue of the journey until the last day or so, and then it becomes very intense and makes one almost irritable.

Coal is used to-day in the engines for the first time during the trip. This section of the track is very

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well built, stone buttresses, stone culverts, and ditches line the roadbed.

I do not understand how the agents keep their accounts. I have purchased tickets three times since leaving Irkutsk, but no collector has been around and I still hold the tickets.

Tashihkiao (Big Stone Bridge) is the junction for Pekin, some three days off, but as I desire to see Port Arthur I shall go there and cross to Chefoo.

Some two hours out from Port Arthur on the Gulf of Korea Russia is building the town of Dalney, which she expects to make into an important port for commerce. Port Arthur is to be the military and naval station.

The visitor to Dalney to-day will certainly consider the place unique. It is a city in all senses of the word save one. It has as yet no people. It is finely laid out with wide streets and many open squares. Places have been provided for parks, schools, churches, etc. Electric lights and electric railways are already in use. Over \$6,000,-000 have been expended for public buildings and improvements, but the population is sparse as yet, and most of those are employed in building the town and railroads. Eighteen million dollars will be expended before the present plans are completed, and Dalney should become a town of size. It is situated on a fine harbour, which never freezes. It is to be absolutely a free port, and arrangements are being made for extensive commerce. Its docks are to extend into deep water, thereby saving the heavy lighterage expenses of nearly all Eastern ports. When the land is sold taxation will begin and the

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city government be placed in the hands of a council, elected by the taxpayers, of which two members must be Russians. Dalney's future should be a bright one if Russia keeps her promise of a "free port," but the reverse is prophesied, and the withering fate of Vladivostok feared.

The day is beautiful. Spring is all around us and a blue sky overhead, while the waters of the Gulfs of Korea and Liao-tung seem to be encroaching more and more on either hand, until we are running along a narrow isthmus, and finally, at 1 P.M., Port Arthur is reached, and the wheels cease to move beneath us. It is with no sense of regret that we descend for the last time from the train.

The Russian portion of the journey is ended. To those who come after me, I can give little advice for their guidance, as by another year the difficulties, if they can be so called, which I have encountered will be done away with by the opening of the road for regular traffic from the Baikal eastward. It will be years before the section around that lake is completed, but its passage now offers no obstacles.

If you would descend the Amur, you must come early—in May—to be sure of water. The rail trip will be most agreeable in spring or autumn, but the summer is very hot in Siberia. Certainly if the trains east of Baikal equal those to the west, you will travel with more luxury and comfort than anywhere else in the world.

As for expense, I find that I paid out, from Petersburg to Port Arthur, 203 roubles (about \$101) for my ticket,—certainly not expensive for such a distance. That includes sleeping-car fare to Irkutsk. Beyond

## Dalney and Port Arthur 171

that, east of that, being the guest of M. D'A. I had nothing to pay for that item. The cost of living was not great at any time. At Port Arthur, by a notice of a day, travellers from the Pacific coast can have a very comfortable car provided for their use and at no extra cost. In this they will journey to Harbin at least, if not to the Baikal.

As for the interest of the trip, to my thinking, one must be dull indeed not to find interest of some sort at all times. The days dragged now and then, but where is that not the case? Certainly I look back with ever increasing interest upon the whole journey, and shall hereafter be able to follow the progress of the great Northern Empire, with a comprehension impossible before the journey was taken. If travel to you means simply Paris shops, then do not come here; but if you like travel, if the world is an open book of pleasant reading to you, cross Siberia,—you will never regret it. It has been said that I have written these notes as from a Russian standpoint. If so, perhaps that is not an objection: surely you cannot understand the Empire in any degree unless you try to place yourself amongst her people and to view matters with their eyes. I have always maintained that our Congressmen and others who hold offices from which they judge and govern our new islands should be forced to visit those possessions. They would then give the world fewer exhibitions of their ignorance, and the inhabitants of our islands would profit accordingly. To apply the rules and regulations of an American town to the people in the Philippines is somewhat absurd.

One sees at a glance that this section of Port

Arthur is all new, all in a transition state. There is no station of any sort, not even a platform. The dust floats in clouds over half-finished buildings and down one's throat, and everything is white with it.

We are met by Mr. M. of the Russo-Chinese Bank and soon find ourselves seated at his hospitable table, which I the more thoroughly appreciated as I had stopped at the hotel—so called—to drop my luggage, a place part way up a dusty hill, consisting of a dining-hall with some cell-like rooms around it, anything but clean, and presided over by a lady from one of the "first families of the Moulin Rouge" in Paris, who promptly gave me to understand that she considered her life thrown away in Port Arthur and would like to go home,—was I leaving soon? I did not accept the invitation.

Port Arthur is nestled behind two high hills between which the waters of the gulf enter and widen out into a spacious harbour,—a safe refuge in any storm. The old town straggles along around the water's edge and over the lesser hills, a somewhat better town than one would expect to find. Off a mile to the west Russia has laid out a handsome new town with wide streets at right angles, and this she is constructing as rapidly as possible. When all is completed it will be handsome and comfortable, judging by the buildings already finished or partly so. Some of them are quite pretentious, and the whole will make Port Arthur a better abiding-spot than it now is. As for the fortifications, we could only look at them from a distance, but they appear to be very extensive. Every hill is occupied by a fort, and there is a complete chain of hills. I am



PORT ARTHUR.

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told that the town is well managed, and one can walk the streets at night in such safety as is not known in Siberia.

Soldiers are everywhere; I understand that the garrison is not nearly so large as it was, though it is reported that there are eighty thousand here now. There are but three men-of-war in the port—all Russian, of course.

Here I meet General Grombchefsky, in whose house I lived when in Osh, Turkestan. Port Arthur is practically impregnable by reason of her mine fields, automobile torpedo station, search-lights, and extensive fortifications, arranged to protect from both sea and land attack. Captain R. G. D. tells me that she has thirty-one 12-inch guns, forty-four 6-in., and fifty-two 4-in. rapid-firing guns; that the 12-in. guns have a range of thirteen thousand yards; also that there are ample barracks for five thousand infantry and twelve hundred artillery. The harbour is rapidly being dredged to thirty feet, and transformed into a great naval station for docking and repairing the largest vessels. The life of Port Arthur greatly reminds me of that of Singapore or Port Said, and I hear that it is a very lively place. The same dare-devil, reckless feeling is in the air that one always notes in these new places connected with great national movements where all races meet with the hope of gain. Viewed from the hills back of the town, and looking seaward, Port Arthur is picturesque. Its hills are a bright yellow, completely enclosing the waters of its bay save where the sea breaks an entrance. All that the traveller is permitted to inspect can be seen in two hours' drive,

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and it is not a place to linger in. There is a report current here that Port Arthur is to be abandoned as a naval and military point in favour of Dalney, but it is mere rumour as yet. The reverse probably holds.

The climate of Port Arthur is pleasant now, but in summer its heat is fearful. This is the real end of the great railroad. Here Russia has settled down with her eyes on all the other nations of the East. Here she will watch and wait, and I believe if we are permitted to look back upon this earth a century hence we shall find Northern China, at least, a Russian province, and that the Great White Tsar has forever banished the "yellow danger." I do not believe that aside from Constantinople Russia has any designs upon, or cares in the least about, the rest of Europe, but that Government in St. Petersburg sits with its right hand extended toward the

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North. Our own great continent is small indeed by comparison. Russia's task is vast,—but if she is not destroyed by internal troubles she will surely accomplish it. We may not approve of her methods or of the exact result which she attains, but in China at least matters could not be worse than they are, and Russia may improve them. Certainly under her rule all men may live in peace and security. The result of her rule in Manchuria is already marked. You may travel there to-day in comparative safety—a thing impossible under Chinese rule. The Tsar holds large concessions all along the line of this road. To those concessions he will probably retire his army; there he will build towns and fortresses, and from these control the land. Such is the meaning of *the Retirement of Russia* from Manchuria.

The world has seen that we have kept our word and evacuated Cuba, but what will be the result? We have cleaned Havana and the whole island, so that that horror, yellow fever, has almost ceased to exist. The devastation of our Southern coast by that disease and the refusal of Spain to take any sanitary measures to stop it was one of the causes of the war. The Cubans now have their island, but already reports come that they are returning to their filthy habits, with the sure result that "Yellow Jack" will again reign over all, again it will invade our coast, and again thousands of our people will be destroyed, all for the sake of restoring to these Cubans an independence which they do not know how to use. In the name of humanity we should have held

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that island, and in the name of humanity we shall yet be forced to assume control. But all that is a long way from Port Arthur. The traveller for Pekin may cross to Chefoo direct, but finding a steamship about to sail for Chimelpo I have decided to go that way and so have a glimpse of Korea.





## CHAPTER XIX

### KOREA—THE MURDER OF A QUEEN

KOREA, the land of the morning calm, has been a quaint and curious volume of the old time up to the present day, but she is adopting Western ideas almost as rapidly as Japan has done, and the pilgrim in search of the land he has read about must come to her coast speedily or he will be bitterly disappointed. Fortunate indeed are those whose steps have led them hitherward, for to my thinking there is no point on this globe more full of interest than this kingdom of the Hermit Crab, extending southward from Manchuria much as Florida does from our southeastern coast. Korea, surrounded by water, possesses a most delightful climate,—so those say who live here,—and evidently the rainfall is heavy, which together with irrigation makes the peninsula a bower of greenness. Her hills and valleys glisten with that restful colour, all such a relief after the desolation and barrenness extending from St. Petersburg to Port Arthur. As our ship approaches the harbour of Chimelpo we pass the cape off which Japan fired into and sank the Chinese transport and so commenced that war of which the

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murder of Korea's queen was but an incident, though a most important one.

We anchor a long distance out from shore and make our passage thither to the monotonous chant of the sampan men who scull us rapidly over the placid waters, on a perfect morning in early June.

One should pass in a stately sedan-chair,—being a person of quality,—over the twenty-six miles which separate the capital from the sea; but this is the twentieth century, and Sedan-chairs have been driven within the walls of the capital by the tooting, screeching engine which draws us in an hour to the shadows of the wall of the city of "Seoul." (Pronounce this as an Irishman would if mentioning his spiritual essence.)

In a bowl of the mountains, which, being volcanic, appear as though some giants had been playing pitch and toss with them, you will find this quaint old city of the farthest Orient. Her rugged and long-useless stone walls completely encircle her, and straggle up to the very summits of the surrounding peaks, to which, if you would discover any traces of a live religion older than that of the missionaries, you must mount. There are the monasteries, all that is left to Buddha in Korea.

As our train approaches the city we look up a long, narrow street, busy with life. Its houses, like all those of these Eastern nations, are one-storied, and the prospect over the town is like that over a vast field of gigantic mushrooms, crowded closely together, and the whole is dusty.

At its farther end towers one of the gateways, whose doors are never closed, now that the electric

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car rattles through them all day and night. But if you are wise you will let the electric car go its way and spend your time in a 'rickshaw,' whose coolies will drag you into every possible hole in the many-holed streets. As with India, so with Korea, the interest centres in the passing throng, and a more quaintly curious spectacle is not vouchsafed the eyes of Western man than that afforded him in Seoul. More's the pity, how soon it will vanish into a "cheap John" state of affairs under the influence of our advanced civilisation! How promptly all these dainty dandies that go tripping by will discard their picturesque dress for our horribly grotesque clothes, thereby doing that which any one can do, and so destroying something unique in the world!

The prevailing colours in Korea are white (and white is no colour) and pale straw colour, varied by a vivid mantle which the women wear,—but of this more anon. These dandies, and there seem to be thousands of them, go mincing by robed in their white or straw-coloured gauze, over which is worn a mantle of black net with wide hemstitching. Their feet are encased in white stockings with red shoes, while their heads are covered by a queer sort of top hat, transparent, made of horsehair, and with a stiff brim. Each dandy carries a small yellow fan, with which he keeps off the flies, or gently taps the man to whom he talks. Spectacles with rims are worn by all, not to see by, but as badges of distinction and to attract attention. Gathering in groups at the corners, these men appear generally when the afternoon's sun will not damage them. All

<sup>1</sup> Jin-riki-sha, or "Pull-man-car."

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these dainty Beau Brummells have spent their entire lives doing nothing, supported by their relatives, and I doubt not that, Narcissus-like, many have died of love of their own enchanting selves.

Here comes one in mourning for his father. His dress is all of pale straw-coloured gauze; on his head he wears an enormous mushroom-shaped and wide-spreading hat of straw, greatly resembling a basket, while with both hands he holds before his face a small square straw screen, which he must never lower until time has softened his affliction, which in Korea public opinion demands shall be three years for a father and two for a mother. He cannot dismiss the dead by a band on a brown hat as we do. Because of the child's sins the parent has died—hence disgrace and the screen.

Ancestral worship is the backbone of the nation, and for three years, night and morning, after a parent's death, offerings of food are made before their tablets, and numerous ones at the grave. To neglect this, makes the offender an outlaw unfit to live. Such is their respect for the dead.

It would appear that most of Korea is the greater part of the time in mourning, and especially is it deep and lasting for one's mother-in-law. As it is a land of no religion, save a propitiation of the evil spirit, death to these people means an eternal parting. Certainly being dead you are done for, and not often remembered, save in the case of royalty, by any monument. Yet the graves are held in great respect. You will see whole hills thickly covered by the cone-shaped mounds so thickly that they must

be side by side, and so low that the rain of summer obliterates them forever.

But to return to the living. These women are all in white, save for a brilliant coat of green silk, with long sleeves, which they never wear as a coat at all while life lasts, but, filling in the space for the neck by a piece of white cloth or paper, they place that part upon their heads, the rest falling about the person like a long mantle. All during life they wear it so, and when death comes, then for the first time the arms are placed in the sleeves, and they pass to the great oblivion robed in this green coat with its scarlet border. It has its meaning. The legend runs that during a siege of the city in the olden days, there came a time when her men were all but exhausted and the women came to their assistance. Taking the coats of the men they placed them over their heads, and the enemy, thinking they were reinforcements, gave up the siege. So this coat is worn to-day as a badge of honour. Nowadays the women of Seoul are secluded, and amongst the higher classes it is so strict that some never leave their compounds. But it was not always so. In fact, when strangers first came to the Hermit Kingdom, the curfew was rung at 8 P.M., at which hour the men were supposed to retire to their houses while the women had the freedom of the town.

Imagine the clatter of tongues when one desired to sleep if such a custom held in America.

Yonder is a group of dandies who are using their cone-shaped hats to sit on, or rather in, the centre of the dusty road being the place, and the time 4 P.M. Around and past them slowly paces that beast of

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Korean burden, the huge bull. There are few horses in Korea, and no oxen.

These dandies discuss their food in the open air, but do not imagine that it is composed of the stuff you would see in China. Dear no! Yonder epicures have a bottle of something and some cake cut in dainty slices.

I am sorry to state that I have seen several men of the lower ranks gloriously tight, but then, a man must have his little enjoyments, and life is short.

Yonder is one asleep in the shadow. He lies on a blue mat with a white border. He is clothed in white muslin. His head rests on a small square box, and a long-stemmed pipe, which holds but a pinch of tobacco, has fallen from his mouth.

Here come a dozen men, robed in bright scarlet, who I supposed were priests of some sort, but no, they are called mounted cavalrymen, though most of them have never been astride of a horse, and never will be. Horses were provided by the king, who gave them to his friends.

This great street is of vast width and teeming with life. The shops on either side carry on a lively trade. The market in its centre reeks with the smell of stale fish. The heat is great, the dust just now intolerable. But turn into that wide avenue northward, and as you advance the noise and dust and heat will drop away from you, the dandies and the mourners be forgotten as you pace up its silent length. On both sides range long rows of deserted buildings: at the end two colossal Korean tigers guard the entrance to a grass-grown platform and a great portal with



GREAT PORTAL OF THE PALACE OF THE NORTH, SEOUL

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three closed doors. You are not royal, and to reach the other side must pass to a postern far around to the right, where some funny opera bouffe soldiers seriously guard no living thing. Like all these simple people, they smile in a childlike fashion and permit us to pass onward into the long vista of grassy, sun-flecked courts, spreading out so invitingly under the shadows of many trees. You will find from the inner side of these closed doors, that a wide avenue of stone stretches forward and mounts by a triple tier of marble steps and as many marble terraces, to the stately pagoda of the throne-room, with its throne empty henceforth and for ever.

The way is guarded by a marble balustrade with many posts, and on the top of each post is perched a graven image of beast or bird. Here is a monkey asleep with his arms around his head, and yonder a parrot dreaming the years away.

No palace of fairyland in its sleep of a hundred years was ever more silent or more deserted.

Away from the great entrance on either side stretches a high wall, forming, as we discover now, a rectangle with inner intersecting walls forming a perfect labyrinth, the key to which would be impossible without a guide, and which extends close to where the mountains quiver on the rise; the whole enclosing some twenty acres of woodland through which are interspersed the palace buildings, or pagodas.

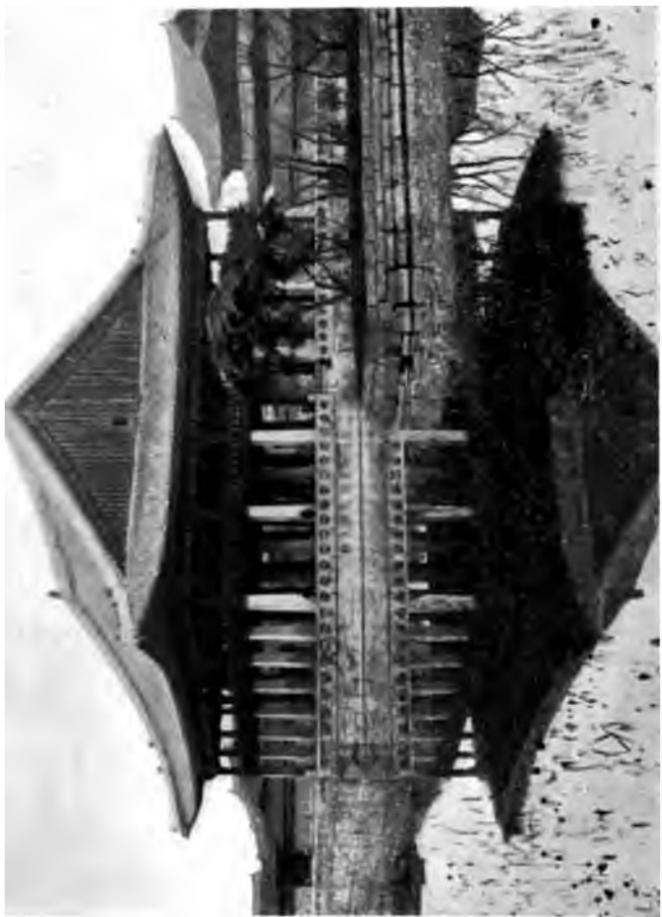
As in all these Eastern palaces, the great rooms occupy the entire pagoda. This throne room is long and wide and high, while its ceiling is the inner side of the lofty roof, which surmounts the walls, and turns

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its corners flauntingly upward in the air, while upon the outer ridge-pole at each angle are grouped a row of fantastic stone figures, animals always. The round projecting rafters of these buildings resemble the pipes of an organ, and are decorated and coloured much the same, but the walls are all a dull red, while the grey stone or white marble terraces and courts form a fitting and beautiful foundation for the whole, and each enclosure is surrounded by its arcades and filled with stately cedars.

The throne-room is a forest of red pillars, with a lofty roof whose panels are brilliantly painted, and whose centre space bears the dragon in green and gold. The throne itself is a raised platform of red lacquer, with a carved screen, before which the monarch was seated when he held state here, which he will never do again,—but the place fascinates. Let us move onward. Court succeeds court, pavilion pavilion, until the mind and feet are both weary, and we rest a space in an enchanting spot in the centre of a marble-lined lake,—the dream house of royalty. Elevated on quaint pillars, with its screen walls removed and hung up overhead, the dwellers therein are cool and quiet, while the heat is great and the world toils around them.

Grotesque stone dragons and apes peer down into the waters of the lake, where the lotus lilies bloom away their splendour. The long, low cedar-trees reach their branches arm-like in questioning fashion over the surrounding arcades, while the fantastic mountains, where grows the ginseng flower, to be seen only through spiritual enlightenment, rise in close proximity and send down cool gusts of air



THE PAVILION OF DREAMS, SEOUL.

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when the king so orders it, that he may sleep in the inner sanctum of this secluded spot.

You may dream your own day away here if you will. You may watch the sunlight as it flickers through the branches downward upon yonder marble steps and never be disturbed unless by a softly gliding footstep which, belonging to your own imagination, is not of this world. You will not be disturbed. The world has roared its loudest and its last through these courts, and carried murder with it when it came for its final visit.

This was the favourite abode of Korea's King and his ill-fated and too patriotic Queen. Here they spent their days, probably in happiness, for these people seem to be so childlike that they must possess the happiness which comes only to childhood.

Off beyond this lotus pond and dream house, you will pass a vast labyrinth of courts, lanes, and pavilions, each so nearly like the other, all low, one-storied, and well walled and gated, that it would seem impossible to find one did one desire to be lost, but the usual traitor—this time in the shape of a Japanese girl—guided the assassins until the Queen and some of her ladies were run to earth and slaughtered in a pavilion in a remote court, close to the outer wall, and next morning in a grove near by all that was left of them was cremated. The spot has since been marked by a small pagoda, and what could be found of the royal lady—one finger—now reposes in a stately tomb, some miles from the city. The murder is believed by every one here to have been done by the Japanese, and because of it the palace stands deserted. The Court will never return to

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these halls, for to these Koreans a spot stained with murder is cursed by the evil spirits and forever banned as a dwelling-place.

Propitiation of such spirits is about all the religion they possess, hence, having no opposition, Korea is a fertile field for the missionary. Immortality to these people is represented by the spark of life transmitted from father to son.

The pavilion of the murder has been locked and barred and is never entered. It was only through persuasion and some dollars that we were enabled to obtain a glimpse of its exterior. Here on the portal incense is burned daily, that more evil may not be ordained to fall upon the royal spouse of the murdered Queen.

It would seem that she was a very good woman and good Queen, much beloved by her husband; and those living in Seoul state that things went much happier and better during her reign. Now Japan has Korea by the throat, and if you attempt to change money you will discover, as is constantly stated, that she is choking the life out of her. One cannot but regret that such a fate could not have overtaken the iniquitous Dowager Empress of China, and that this woman could have been spared.

Japan amazes the beholder by her progress in the direction of Western civilisation, until the last point or so be reached, and then his amazement is equally great at beholding that the leopard has not really changed his spots, or at least retains many of the old ones.

So it was in this Korean affair. The behaviour of her troops while in the land was all that could have



THE PAVILION OF THE MURDER, SEOUL.



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been desired, and the same held good in China two years ago. In Korea foreigners felt safe when they were there, yet against this one must set off that useless destruction of the Chinese transport, *Kowshing*, with its awful loss of life,—1200 in all,—and the murder of the Queen, which occurred on October 8, 1895.

In the former case China was, it is true, violating her agreement not to send troops to Korea, but the ship was defenceless and could have been captured and taken to Japan, who surely had not learned from her studies of the West that wholesale murder would be in order here. It is said that the English Captain was rescued and presented with \$3000. The dead Chinamen told no tales.

The massacre at Port Arthur is another blot on Japan, and the third is this murder of a woman.

The Queen, a much stronger character than the King, was determined that her country should be for its people. We have a doctrine of the same sort concerning the Americas.

The ridiculous reforms of the Japanese—such as ordering a change in the national dress as to form and colour, all of which was to force trade with Japan—she strongly opposed. She also resented the putting into office men whom the King had outlawed and sentenced to death. She outwitted the best man that Japan could send against her, until he retired. This one little woman held her own and fought her country's battles here in this romantic palace, until four hundred Japanese soldiers, guided by a woman of their race, penetrated its labyrinths and murdered this woman and a few of her ladies,—

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hacked them to death with swords, then, pouring kerosene over their bodies, burned them to ashes. Their task completed these soldiers of the Land of the Morning marched away.

The world hears little or nothing of these deeds of the hidden claws, but much, and justly so, of the general humanity of the nation. Of course, Japan disclaimed all this, but foreigners who live in Seoul know its truth, and Japan promptly availed herself of the advantages offered by this outrage, though by the escape of the King she lost all she had gained.

Had this Queen been a blood-thirsty character like the Dowager Empress of China, no one could have blamed any nation which had removed her,—as a prisoner,—but this was out-and-out brutal murder.

The day after the murder and until the King escaped, some months later, the palace was completely in possession of the Japanese.

The escape was effected by riding under the seat of a sedan-chair, wherein rode a waiting-woman, the guards having previously been made happy by a good dinner.

This Korean Queen was sacrificed to Japan's determination to possess the power in the kingdom, murder was done and these halls stand accursed. The place is haunted: let us leave it.

The setting sun turns the mountain peaks into crimson and gilds the darkly drooping pine-trees, while the lotus in the moat waves as though moved by unseen fingers below, and one gazes downward, almost expecting to see the shadowy face of the Queen, drifting, drifting.

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But even as we watch, the day fades away, and the curtains of night descend upon Seoul's haunted palace, driving us forth, past the silent throne-room, down the marble steps, off and away between the guardian tigers of stone, followed only by the echo of our own voices and the sound of one distant, booming, deep-toned bell.





## CHAPTER XX

### PEKIN, THE END OF THE JOURNEY

THE transition from a cool, clean, quiet ship to the hubbub and dirt of a Chinese port is marked and rapid.

Our ship from Chimelpo had sailed over summer seas and our stomachs had been astonished by most excellent food.

The port of Tien-tsin lies up the shallow, muddy river, and is only approached at the highest of tides, even by tugs. Our ship enters with much difficulty, and we lie all night in the river. Early morning finds the tug puffing and blowing impatient signals for our start. It is late,—we have been ready for some hours.

We land in a hurry and are rushed through the streets of the port, the crowd parting before us like water and closing in as solidly behind us.

The confusion at the station is tremendous. We have no time for tickets, but are bundled into the cars in a heap.

This section of the Siberian Chinese Railway is now in English hands and conducted upon military principles. The station master is an officer in full

RAILWAY STATION AT TIENTSIN.



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uniform, and the employees soldiers of the rank and file, also in uniform. They are most obliging and assist us in every way,—notwithstanding the confusion is that of war, more or less,—much less just now, thanks to the allied powers.

There are two first-class carriages, with wooden seats, two second, also all wood, but both clean. All the rest of the train is composed of box cars with no tops, and crammed with Chinese humanity and some horses. There must be some thousands of the former, all laughing and chattering like children, and looking anything but hostile. It would be much more easy to convince one that they are all engaged in the laundry business, than that they had ever been to war. The terrible Boxers, of whom we have heard so much of late years, surely were a race separate and apart from these. But the train has started, and we must enter or get left.

The end of the Manchurian Railway is just across the river from Shan-hai-Kuan, where the Great Wall of China comes down to the sea, terminating, in a British fort, in a formless lot of masonry, but as the eye follows its course inland one sees it take shape and, circling round the town (of which it forms part of the walls), start westward on its long march over mountains and valley.

From Shan-hai-Kuan the railway, now under British management, follows the coast to Taku, where we have just landed. It is the port of Tien-tsin, which latter place the traveller reaches in an hour's time. Taku is but a port and not of interest, and Tien-tsin is thirty miles inland. Here we will rest a day before going on to Pekin. It is not a

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place of interest ordinarily, but just now, being the headquarters of the allied forces, the moving panorama of the streets is very singular and attractive. I venture to say that from a seat on the veranda of the Astor House one will see representatives of more nations of the earth than from any other spot on the globe. This balcony is full of officers drinking and smoking,—a chattering, laughing throng, waited upon by John Chinaman, with his dancing, mincing gait. Here are Englishmen in dinner jackets,—no "harness" for them save when on duty. Yonder is a coterie of chattering French; the boisterous, noisy German, with his mustachios turned flat up to his ears, is everywhere, and when another is added to the number the place resounds with scraping chairs and feet as they rise to salute or clink glasses as they drink the health of the late comer. In the corner, separate and apart, sit a few men, whom, by their elegance of dress and deportment, we know at once to be Austrians, while a number of little Japs are grouped around trying to assume Western airs in clothes in which they appear most uncomfortable. There is also the inevitable "business man of the East." He and his fellow workers are always Englishmen,—young men, gaunt and hollow-cheeked, who gather in knots and talk about shipping or the decline of shipping, or tell tales of some dead-and-gone member of the class who made himself famous by bar-room riots.

Their dress is almost as distinctive as a uniform, generally a grey sacque suit, high collar, and invariably a travelling cap. They are thin of feature and walk with a stoop, with their hands in their pockets.

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They always smoke a pipe. If you question them they are up in all the China coast tales and latest scandals. They troop into these hotels at meal-times until one wonders where they all come from, and they troop off again directly they have finished. Later in the day you will find them at the club, playing billiards, and discussing "whiskey pegs."

The East would not be the East without them. They run it for us. When they speak of their families it is as "Missus and the kids." I can hear one of them now saying, "I blew the bloody beggar into bits," referring to some episode in the late troubles.

In the street stand two stalwart men in yellow khaki, their jet-black hair and beards and piercing black eyes surmounted by high red turbans,—Sikhs from the north of India, with which England has done such good service in policing this Eastern land. When these men start after a lot of the Celestials, one can compare the result to nothing save a huge black dog after a lot of geese; the same wild flights in all directions, the same cackle and piercing shrieks. But it 's no use, John. You 're soon caught and escorted back by means of your pigtails. The Manchus did a good thing for these officers of the law when they forced you to wear that sign of bondage. John has caught on to the fact that he gains a yard at least in distance by tying his pigtail around his head, and many do so.

These Sikhs are a splendid lot of men. Yonder stands one at least six feet six inches in height, dressed in yellow. His gorgeous green and gold turban shades a face whose regular features and

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splendid black eyes cause one to cease to wonder that, if the Moor resembled this man, the fair Desdemona was so fond of "her most filthy bargain." Yet this man is of an inferior race to yonder little Jap, who resembles nothing so greatly as an ape, and who it would be impossible to imagine any woman could love.

There are no American officers here, none in Tientsin now, and of those of other nations the English are the best uniformed—"harness" being perfection in their hands. After them come the Austrians. The French and Italians are about on a par, but the Germans understand the art of dress less than any—certainly dress for hot climates. No coat that must go into a wash-tub should ever be made with tails or tight-fitting, as a cloth coat can be made. The sack, or Norfolk jacket, is the only form that will retain its shape through the laundry.

Strange to say, I have seen no Russian officers or soldiers in Tien-tsin. If they are not here they probably consider Port Arthur near enough for all purposes.

As the night falls, the busy throngs on the porch transfer themselves to the dining-room, whose punkhas can be seen waving through yonder windows.

As they enter the room every German salutes every other German, or any one he knows. It is amusing to the reserved Anglo-Saxon, who makes his entrance as quietly as possible, and gets to his place with as little observation from others as may be, to see a German officer enter a large dining-room and immediately coming to an attitude of Attention! begin to salute separately every

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one in the entire room that he may happen to know, and whose eye he earnestly tries to catch, no matter how distant its owner.

Outside the world rushes by in carriages and jin-riki-shas. Yonder goes a victoria that must certainly have been made with the aid of an axe, a saw, and a few planks, all found in the back yard.

In the moving throngs of the street there are English ladies on bicycles and in carriages, many carrying tennis rackets and going home from a game happy, while before and around them are so many of those other poor women to whom "home" has been a meaningless word for so long that they scarcely remember it at all,—outcasts from New York to San Francisco, from San Francisco to Yokohama, they are thrown up here,—"camp followers." God have mercy on them! where will they drift to next?

So the panorama of life rolls by at Tien-tsin. All is colour, laughter, and bustle in these days, though tragedy may come down upon the whole at any time. Be that as it may, it is peaceful now. The trees in the park over the way wave lazily in the dusty air, and Gordon Hall, sacred to the victim of the Soudan, rears its tower high against the after-light of a departed day.

I notice in the history of Tien-tsin that it was a walled town upon the sea as late as two thousand years ago. So, for two thousand years it has been a town with the same form of government, the same forms of religion, all of which apparently suit its people, having been tried sufficiently long by them to be proven. We, with our paltry century, and Europe with but a few more to her credit, come in

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and say, "You are all wrong and do not know what is good for you. We do, and you shall adopt our ideas, in all of which we are actuated by pure love for you,—nothing else; and don't forget that we will come to you, but will never permit you to come to us." Is this nation of four hundred millions and thousands of years of experience going to accept that?

With the troops withdrawn there are but about one thousand foreigners in Tien-tsin, with six hundred thousand natives in yonder dusty town. It is said by those who claim to know, that the day the troops are removed the troubles will be renewed. That the world will hear of more "horrors in China" seems certain. Rest assured of one thing: the door can only be kept open by never allowing it to be closed, and that can only be done by men and ships. Horrors will promptly follow upon their withdrawal.

It is stated here, Tien-tsin, May 28th, that the present fall in silver will add \$65,000,000 to the indemnity of \$680,000,000 to be paid by China, most of this must come from the central and southern sections of the Empire, which had little to do with the late disturbances. It is believed by many that this indemnity will never be paid, or at least without another war.

If you can keep China from arming, if you can make her return to her old disinclination for military life, and stay therein, there may be a chance for your safety, but I doubt your ability to do so. Even now orders are out for constant practice with the bow and arrow,—not being allowed guns,—but perfection in the former will ensure it with the latter when they do get them, and an army of twenty mil-

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lion will not be great for a nation numbering four hundred million. All the hosts of the earth will be nothing against them whenever they know their power, and this power is guided and controlled by such an implacable enemy to all the outer world as the Dowager Empress, though she can scarcely live until that day comes.

Why do the powers support this woman on the throne, and allow the Emperor, who is a progressive man, to be deposed?

If the Emperor had been reinstated would not the enlightened men of his nation have come forward again as they did a few years ago, and, supported by the powers, would not the work in China have made wonderful strides, and the future been assured? Now what have you? Where do you stand? In constant daily fear of your lives, for none of you believe that the danger is over, or ever will be while the Dowager Empress remains on the throne. You have awakened China, but placed your enemy at the helm of the ship of state.

"But," you say, "the Emperor is a weak man." Perhaps so, but he was strong enough, bright enough, to start those reforms, and, supported by the powers and his own wise men, who now dare not come forward, could he not have carried them out?

An English officer said to me to-day that if the Empress had not been restored, the indemnity would never have been paid. Is it, then, merely the money we are after?

Russia knows well that the return to power of the Empress means trouble in the near future, trouble which that power hopes will force the partitioning

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of China, and that is what the Government of the Tsar desires.

Sectional hatred will be one of the safeguards for foreigners in China, but it will never equal in intensity that of India, for religion plays no part therein. Again, the dishonesty of the Mandarin class and their constant plundering of their Government will prevent any great concerted uprising while it lasts; and it gives no evidence of abatement. As Spain's throat was cut by the dishonesty of her own people in power, we must hope, for our very lives, that China's will continue to be.

During the Japan war large sums were provided to furnish ammunition to the forts, and when captured, great piles of cannon-balls, made of mud, were discovered. So, also, in the inspection of a fort. After the roll-call the inspector would retire for a little refreshment, when the same men were promptly marched to the next fort to be inspected, and so on to all the forts, which were reported to have their "full complement of defenders."

Thousands of Boxers were hand-workers thrown out of employment by introduction of machinery. Western powers have had serious trouble from this same source, and great authors have made it the subject for some of their best efforts.

The Boxers' absurd idea that they are invulnerable was fostered to a great degree by the orders of the Empress to her troops—sent out in supposed resistance to them—to "fire over their heads." These Boxers seem to-day to have disappeared entirely.

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They did as they were told because they were so instructed. Nearly every man was, or would have become, a Boxer. The same order of things will occur again. The man who conducted me so smilingly and so peacefully to the Great Wall and back undoubtedly was a Boxer.





## CHAPTER XXI

### ENTRANCE TO THE CAPITAL

MORNING finds me *en route* for Pekin. A few more hours and the end of my journey will be reached.

One would judge by the crowds and commotion at the stations that all the world is journeying to Pekin to-day. The long gravel platform is filled with a hurrying throng, and one's luggage almost gets lost in the confusion. All the officials are officers and soldiers, every train has its van full of guards—things move with a military air. As I have stated, the long train is mostly of open box-cars filled with Chinese, mules, and horses. Fans flutter, pigtails and horses tails whisk in the gayest possible fashion, and all seem happy as the day is long and sunshine bright.

There must be twenty open cars, all crowded. Then come two second-class and two first,—all of wood inside and out,—and lastly a van full of English soldiers, with whom I spend most of the hours drinking beer and spinning yarns as we rattle along over the plains of China. It is hot, and finally such a sandstorm arises that we are driven within

and all windows closed. There we stifle for four hours.

In my compartment there are two French priests in black soutanes and shovel hats, a Chinese Mandarin, two English officers, and a Jew drummer who spends most of his time in the vain endeavour to comprehend why I would leave Tien-tsin, "and the races coming on," for a place like Pekin.

The ride is not one of interest, save for the curious train, which goes on under full guard.

There are no eating-houses on the line, but eggs, cake, bread, and beer can be bought from the natives at every stoppage, and all good.

We are from 9 A.M. until 2.40 P.M. doing the eighty-five miles.

Toward one o'clock the wind increases to a tempest, darkening the sun with the sand. What I can see of the landscape shows a perfectly flat spreading surface, with one sluggish river, the Pei-ho. Nothing of interest presents itself, until about 2 P.M., when the great wall of Pekin looms through the sandstorm. Our train runs parallel to it for some miles at about fifteen hundred feet distance. The intervening space is covered with tombs and temples, then the wall, grey and majestic, with one great gateway, and beyond it the trees seem as thick as a primeval forest. There are few people to be seen, and save for the noise of our train there is no sound of life. Finally, as I gaze forward through the blinding glare and dust, our engine makes a sudden turn to the left, draws us rapidly through a breach in the wall, and the long journey is ended.

We are in Pekin, but there is no city here, nothing

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save apparently limitless paddy-fields and forests; a peaceful, altogether rural scene, not at all one's idea of what Pekin should be. In the far distance rises one solitary pagoda, the only sign of human life, but as the train glides on the houses appear, grow thicker and thicker, the pagoda forms a gateway of the Tartar town, and as we reach it, we turn again to the left and run along beneath the high wall of that city. To our left is the Chinese town, while through an occasional gateway to the right, the long, wide streets of Tartar town are visible. Just beyond the water gateway we come to our final halt: it cannot be called a station,—there is no vestige of a building. We are dumped into such a cloud of dust, such bewildering confusion, that to any save an experienced traveller the situation would appear hopeless.

Seizing a coolie as he flies by, I load him with my hand luggage and then, steering for the van, enter and claim my trunks, which four other coolies shoulder,—I have eight in my service by this time, and off the procession starts. John does not wait to ask me what to do,—he knows that I know that he knows, and in a few moments bag and baggage and self are loaded into six riki-shas and we are off. I give the eight coolies \$1.00 (forty cents in our money) and they depart fully satisfied.

As we start into the city it is impossible to see, for the dust, heat, and glare are as intense as they know how to be at 3 P.M. in summer. The riki-shas totter along like drunkards, and continually drop in holes up to the hub. Pekin's streets are very wide, and have never been paved. In the

## Entrance to the Capital 203

centre the roadway is elevated, or rather the centre of the roadway and the sidewalks are supposed to be on the same level, while on each side of the former the ground has been excavated to a depth of three or four feet and fifty feet wide. There is no protection for the vehicles on the centre, and the delight of every riki-sha boy in Pekin is to get as near the edges as possible. Often he goes over and you with him. I confess I have never used my cane so freely on mankind as I do on this first ride in this city. "Boy" only laughs and goes nearer the edge.

Finally we turn into Legation Street, and our own flag is almost the first to greet me. The sentinel at the gate evidently knows where I belong, as he promptly salutes. Nearly all the flags of the world,—certainly those of the great nations,—wave along this street, and this was the centre of attack.

Our Legation backs on to the Tartar wall which was in possession of the insurgents, who did their best to destroy everything. Finally they succeeded in firing most of the buildings, when a terrific rain-storm coming on saved the whole. The superstitious Chinese regarded that as something beyond their power, and for a time were quiet, but my riki-shas are a long way past our flag and flying along the street of the Tartar city.

The houses on either side are one-storied. There is much gilding and colour. The smell of fried food and joss-sticks pervades the atmosphere; the dust is awful. All the population are out of doors,—dust and heat make no difference to these people.

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But my condition when I turned into the wretched Hotel du Nord was not pleasant, nor was the announcement "No rooms" calculated to make my state more happy.

I passed onward to the Hotel Pekin, where I found quarters, and the house proved to be infinitely better than the other,—at least it is clean for Pekin, and the table is fairly good. Once you pass the horde of riki-shas which swarm around its entrance, you enter a crude brick courtyard, covered by an awning of straw mats, and full of tables, at which a motley throng are discussing all sorts of drinks. One-storied buildings surround you, one of which is the dining-room. Other one-storied buildings are in the court behind, and there, in crude bedrooms, you sleep, and sleep soundly, for one gets very tired in Pekin. Certainly I feel little like anything save a bath, rest, and dinner, but I shortly sally forth to our Legation, where, in the pleasant, shadowy drawing-room of Mrs. Conger, I meet some people who are going next day to the Great Wall and Ming Tombs. It is an opportunity not to be missed, and I decide to join the party, leaving my inspection of Pekin until my return.





## CHAPTER XXII

### GREAT WALL AND MING TOMBS

THE Great Wall is at a distance from the capital of, I should say, forty-five miles. We have three mounted soldiers as a guard, as we start out at 8 A.M. on Sunday. Each of us rides in a mule litter, a crude sort of palanquin, swung on poles, with a mule in front and one behind. The servants and traps go in a two-wheeled cart. These little horses, or mules as it may happen, move at a steady pace of about three to three and one-half miles per hour. We leave the great north gateway at nine o'clock and never pause or falter, except for about ten minutes for a drink, until two o'clock. Then we rest for an hour and a half and lunch. *En route* at 3.30 and steadily onward until Nankow is reached at 7 P.M. The ride has been very hot and dusty, but the motion of the litter easy, and when once accustomed to it one can rest with comfort.

At Nankow we spend the night in a very dirty Chinese inn, of course having brought our own food and bedding. Here the first hitch in the arrangements occurs. It is some fifteen miles to the Great Wall, and the drivers of the carts announce that the

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pathway is too narrow for their vehicles, forcing the men therein to take to ponies. I did not believe it and ordered my litter to be on hand at 6 A.M. I will say for my man that I do not believe he had any hand in the matter, as he had gone to bed before I gave the order and merely nodded when he received it. Those in litters insisted upon going on in them, and, as I expected, we found that a coach and four could have been driven all the way to and through the Great Wall and off into the wilderness beyond.

The way becomes picturesque as we near the mountains, pressing through several very ancient towns, all completely walled, and one possessing a very fine stone archway. Vast caravans of camels and donkeys throng the route—this is the great highway to the North—to Siberia and Manchuria, whose tribes the wall was built to keep out. There are many walls on the hills, but evidently not the one we are in search of. We pass farther and farther into the solitudes until, where the mountains tower around us, solemn and majestic, we see that eighth wonder of the world, and I think I do not exaggerate, when I state that this world holds no more majestic impressive sight than that of this Great Wall of China as it marches in stately procession from the sea at Shan Hai Kuan to this distant desert.

Take all the castles of the Rhine and Danube, and add to them all those of the rest of Europe, place them in a solitude vast and solemn, connect them by a wall, majestic in its proportions, and give the whole an age that was old when the Nazarene was but a prophecy, and you have some slight idea of this eighth wonder of the world, the Great Wall

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of China. As I stand on one of its towers my mind is confused, dumbfounded, by the prospect. These are no mere hills over which the Wall winds its way, but very sizable mountains; up and down, now within the deepest valleys, now upon the highest peaks, and so placed that it is never at any point commanded by the surrounding hills. There is no position at which its defenders could be taken at a disadvantage. Off to the north, the eye—and the mind's eye—wanders on and on until the mountains sink into hills, which in their turn vanish into the endless plains, and on into the polar ocean. In the near distance stand some isolated outposts,—lonely towers,—looking northward to the land of the Tartar. As the sun strikes the panorama to-day, all to the north is yellow and barren, all to the south green and fertile. It seems an outrage to give details, but a few must come in just here. The structure is some thirty feet high, built, up to the base of the battlements, of grey stone in blocks. Within the battlements the wall is twelve feet in width, and the battlements, which are of brick, are about two feet each in thickness, making a total of sixteen feet in all. The intervening space is filled solidly with broken stone and brick, and paved with smooth stone. The bricks of the battlements are twelve by six inches, and three inches thick. The stones of the wall are one yard long by eighteen inches wide and thick,—of a reddish grey granite, beautifully cut and set.

Its towers rise at frequent but irregular intervals, sometimes five hundred feet apart, but where the wall ascends the steep sides of the mountains the distances between them is much greater.

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History relates that Tsin Chi-hwangti, who built the wall, found parts already existing, and then conceived the idea of uniting them. It was finished 204 B.C., and was ten years in building, seven of which were after that Emperor's death.

Commencing at Shan-hai-Kuan, it marches westward, and in the province of Chilis there are two walls enclosing the basin of the Sangkan-ho, west of Pekin (or, rather, the wall branches). The inner branch was built by a Ming Emperor, and this is the wall before us now. The older structure, which we saw at Shan-hai-Kuan, is to the north of us and marches west for fifteen hundred miles.

Imagine standing on the tower of such a structure in our Alleghanies and beholding it stretch away as far as the eye can reach, while the mind follows it to the Atlantic on one side, and into the heart of Kansas on the other, over plains and rivers, now into the deepest valleys and now rising over mountains nearly six thousand feet in height, so steep in sections that you cannot climb its roadway, yet maintaining its majestic proportions always, until it sinks away into the sea or the far-off desert. This Nankow, or south gate, is the great entrance for the capital city, and the road which leads up to it for fifteen miles from the plains was at one time guarded by five additional walls and gateways, now all in ruins.

As the traveller turns and looks southward, the whole valley appears a network of walls within walls, while the mountains are dotted with ruined towers. The yellow roadway winds in and out and away, the passing trains of camels but adding to its loneliness.



NANKOW GATE, GREAT WALL OF CHINA.



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How many thousands of human lives must have gone out in the building of this structure, and how useless it all is now!

We returned to Nankow for the night, too weary to object any further to the dirty Chinese hotel, though I did insist that that the mules and donkeys be relegated to a more distant spot than the night before. I have heard many of those gentle beasts give utterance to their feelings, but I have never listened to such noises as these in our train can produce. Sleep is simply impossible if they are within the same compound.

Insect powder in quantities seemed to assure us a quiet night, and trusting to it we went early to rest. I had noticed what I took to be a lizard disappear into a hole near my head, and into the hole I poured a quantity of the powder, thinking to be sure of peace. I had probably been asleep for two hours when I awoke suddenly with the consciousness that there was something on my chest. Involuntarily I raised my hand and my fingers closed upon some wriggling creature which as I flung it onto the room floor stung me sharply in the ball of my thumb, which I proceeded promptly to suck for dear life, remembering the many stories of lives saved by this very simple action. I had been stung by a scorpion, which I saw scuttle away in the dim light. I confess I was uneasy for a time, not knowing how dangerous the sting might be, but the soldier on guard assured me that it would amount to little and got some clay, which he rubbed into the wound. After that I kept my thumb in alcohol, and the pain gradually subsiding, I went to sleep, utterly tired out. The

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affair so alarmed the lady with us, that she sat up for the rest of the night, with two candles to light the scene, and—she killed a centipede on her pillow.

We were none of us sorry when daylight came, which it did not do without a terrific storm of wind and sand, which apparently threatened destruction to the inn.

For the benefit of those who come after me, I would say that we had made a mistake and gotten into the wrong place. The inn on the left-hand side as you come from Pekin is much better and seemed clean. In fact, we were told that its landlord had had it furnished with European stuff, all of which the Boxers destroyed.

From Nankow it is a four-hours ride to the Ming Tombs.

The storm has cooled the air and our way lies over green fields well away from the dusty highway. A square red pagoda with yellow tiled roof is the first sign of our approach to the famous resting-places of China's royal dead. Some distance farther on stands another similar structure, whose roof and ridge-poles bear the flaunting dragon's wings and tails, and which is guarded by four stately columns of white marble, richly carved, yellow with age, and each bearing a griffin on top. In the centre of this pagoda, where its two halls cross each other, stands an enormous white marble monolith, in the shape of a turtle, which bears on its back an obelisk of black marble, rising high into the shadows of the roof and engraved with a poem by the Emperor Kienlung.

As we pass beyond and look outward the plan



AVENUE OF BEASTS, MING TOMBS.



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and scope of this wonderful Necropolis lies spread before us. A wide avenue of white marble stretches away, guarded by many animals of a pale grey stone. At its far end is another gateway with red walls and red roof, and away beyond the marble roadway winds hither and thither, through a great green valley, spangled with buttercups and daisies; a broad river, murmuring along, is crossed by marble bridges, while here and there on its banks, or nestled in the farther nook of the hills, rise the red-and-yellow tombs of the dead emperors, to each of which leads up a marble roadway, and the whole is encircled by a stately chain of mountains, domed by a fair blue sky. To my thinking this is the most beautiful resting-place ever conceived by man,—and whether there be a hereafter or not, here is an earthly paradise.

As I pass down the avenue of beasts, I notice that they stand in pairs,—some sixty feet between each pair,—male and female, facing each other across the causeway. There are dragons, horses, lions, unicorns, camels squatting and standing, elephants, mastodons, and finally man—three of military and three of civil dignitaries, all in almost perfect condition. The avenue is closed by a fine gateway. When this is passed we again enter our chairs, ride for four or five miles over the marble Appian Way, twice crossing the river on solid bridges of marble, and finally mounting a hill near its banks, to where stands the mausoleum of Yung Lo, embowered in trees, and cared for by one or two lonely monks who open its portals to us, and then depart, leaving us to wander at will. Through a gateway

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of red and yellow, across a spacious court, up a flight of wide steps into an entrance hall, where dragons and strange gods regard us solemnly, past another court, and mounting a marble terrace, richly carved and mellow with time, we enter a great funeral hall, where is enshrined the tablet of the dead,—nothing else in all the vastness save this small red tablet with its inscription in gold, enshrined in a curved teakwood throne. Before it stands the sacrificial table with its flower-jars, candlesticks, and incense urn. The hall itself is magnificent in extent, but is empty save for a forest of great teakwood columns, and tradition has it that under each column there dwells a turtle, placed there when the tomb was built, and which lives to this day, drawing its air through a small hole pointed out at the base of each column.

But the royal dead is not here. You must pass out behind and across another court, with a stone fountain and many griffins, and full of stately pine and oak trees. There you will see the portals of the tomb rising from its triple terraces, amidst a tangle of wildwood. No more secluded spot could be imagined, and one may well believe the story that the Emperor can still be heard pacing to and fro here where he has slept so long, for, cross the court and enter yonder stately pagoda, which you will do up an incline in a tunnel, and you will pause in wonder. Surely that is a footstep, yet you are alone. There could be no sound save the rustling of the branches or the murmur of the river, but there it is again,—a distinct, soft footfall, which advances to meet you as you approach the walled-up arch, beyond which sleeps the dead, and which dies



A GLIMPSE IN THE MAUSOLEUM OF YUNG-LO, MING TOMBS.

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## Great Wall and Ming Tombs 213

away in the inner recesses as you pass upward to where, in an upper chamber, which looks outward over all the fair valley, you may read the high-sounding titles of the monarch engraved on a stone obelisk, "The perfect ancestor and literary Emperor." But all this will not hold your attention while the sun pours a golden glory over that fair panorama without.

From here you can fully understand the plan of this city of silence. The guarding mountains, the thirteen royal mausoleums, their red walls and yellow roofs gleaming in the sunlight, the marble roadways wandering through the green meadows and over sparkling rivers, while the avenue of beasts stretches away in the distance. The panorama is enchanting, and entirely different from any other in the world. All the emperors of the Ming dynasty save two are buried here,—the first being interred near Nanking, and the last—who hanged himself—near Pekin.

As you turn to descend you will see that the real sepulchre is a huge mound of earth against which this pagoda has been built. The sarcophagus itself rests in the centre of this mound, and is therefore actually buried. Time has covered the mounds in the several mausoleums with trees, and the murmuring music of their branches is the only sound which breaks the stillness of the summer day,—forms the only requiem which is ever chanted over these royal dead.

During the week occupied by our trip to the Wall and the Ming Tombs, we met with no evidence of

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hostility, and experienced no trouble of any sort, save a slight fracas with our drivers (my own always excepted). They threatened to upset the chairs unless we took a certain direction, which we absolutely refused to do. Our guard told them that they would be promptly shot if such a thing were attempted. It did occur, whether by accident or design could not be determined, but no one was hurt. Our last night was spent in a Buddhist temple, quite the cleanest spot on the whole journey. I regret to record that the priests of this temple, having been paid by the photographer of our party to pose for him, got gloriously drunk, and when the time came could not sit up, much less stand. Moral: never pay for anything in China until you have gotten it. **The evening of the following day found us back in the capital, in every way satisfied with our journey.**





PAGODA OF THE DEAD. MAUSOLEUM OF YUNG-LO, MING TOMBS.





## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE SUMMER PALACE

THE "forbidden city" has, of course, been closed to the world since the return of the Court to Pekin, and we are assured that no more permits will be given for the Summer Palace, situated some ten miles out of town, as the Court will shortly move there for the heated term. However, there is a pass at every one's disposal, which generally opens most doors in China, and that we mean to try at this famous resting-place of the Emperors of this celestial realm.

The journey must be made in riki-shas, starting at 9 A.M., with three boys to each riki-sha.

For the next hour and a half we are rushed through the streets of the city at an amazing pace. The sensation of a riki-sha ride in Pekin can scarcely be described,—it certainly will never be forgotten. As I have stated, the centre of the street is elevated, and this reserved, by common consent, for carts and camels. So the riki-sha is rushed through the space between the shops and the booths which face them. The riki-sha has been in use in Pekin only since the late war. The dexterity of

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these boys, therefore, is marvellous, and one is in constant wonderment at not being landed in a cauldron of hot soup, a huge doughy cake, or an unfinished coffin. That the people are not knocked down and run over, and children killed by the dozens, is also a matter of astonishment, but nothing ever happens. Not even a dog is run over in the wild race for the walls. The boys have a peculiar cry, apparently understood by men and animals. The dogs with half-open eyes will calculate to an inch the necessary space, and they never move unless forced to do so. All the time the dust and glare are intense, and the atmosphere filled with the odor of fried meat and incense.

I have often heard it said that to see one Chinese city is to see all, but such is certainly not the case. I know of no cities offering greater contrasts than Hong Kong, Canton, Shanghai, and Pekin; and to my thinking Pekin is the most interesting of them all. Hong Kong is hopelessly European. In Canton the streets are so narrow, the smells so appalling, the populace so hostile, that one is hurried along in a sedan-chair and secures but fleeting glimpses of the life of the people. Old Shanghai is too vile to tempt a second visit; but certainly Pekin—with its stately walls and gates, its wide streets, its glimpses of distant palaces, its great Lama Temple and Temple of Heaven—the Most Majestic—is unique, and in its street-life there is far greater variety than in the lesser towns. Of course, it attracts the life which is always drawn to the capital city, and whereas you soon weary of the people in the south you never weary of the panorama of Pekin's streets. In the

rides to and fro across the city, one gets right amongst her people. The riki-shas pass along where the sidewalk should be, so that one may gaze into the shops from close quarters, while the other side is lined with the booths of the people, cafés, restaurants, barber shops,—everything that is used or needed.

You may place your hands upon great coffins or porcelains in the shops on your right and bargain and buy from the booths on your left, and of the wares spread all over the ground.

To-day, during our ride to the Summer Palace, all Pekin was cooking its dinner, and I think no European stomach could live upon that which seems to suit these Orientals. What it consists of I know not, and scarce care to be informed. It is nearly all fried. It looked like snakes.

I am told that to the allies we owe the present comparatively clean condition of the city. Pekin was divided into sections, each nation cleaning a section, and the Japs have the credit of having achieved the best results. The riki-sha is also an introduction at their instance. Heretofore there was nothing save the mule-chair and two-wheeled carts. There are still no carriages. The riki-sha is the best vehicle imaginable for the city.

The active life of a riki-sha boy is three years. The vehicle is the invention of an American, and was first used in the early sixties, the perambulators of our early days furnishing the idea. The grown-up travellers therein sit enthroned and surrounded by all the merchandise of China.

These shops are one-storied, but brilliant with

much carving and gilding and many tall poles with floating banners.

One sees constant ceremonials of interest—now a wedding, now a funeral, now the passage of some foreign troops, closely followed by the cortège of some mandarin of importance.

Here comes a funeral. The great coffin, composed of unpainted timbers three or four inches thick, is carried by bearers in red and black on high poles of red. The mourners come behind in quaint little blue, round-topped carts. Every one is in white, but there are no tears. In fact I have never seen a Chinese in tears—often in smiles, but never weeping, though I am told they often do weep. The dead, borne away to the beating of many tom-toms, passes on its solemn way, and we rush on towards the north-west gate, where we pause a moment to rest our coolies, and in so doing stop the entire concourse and congest the traffic.

As I look back the dark archway frames a moving picture of palanquins, carts, riki-shas, and stately camels, sharply outlined against a tawny sky.

These gates of Pekin are each a huge square fortress, topped by many-windowed pagodas with the ever-flaunting dragon-tails on their roofs. The portals are not opposite. That would afford a clean sweep for attack from the outer sides. One enters on one side and turns at right angles to find the exit. From this gate a wide avenue, paved in heavy flagging, extends all the way to the Summer Palace, and is the only pavement in Pekin save that to the Temple of Heaven. Our boys take advantage of the smooth surface and fairly fly along, while we



THE SUMMER PALACE, NEAR PEKIN.



hold on for dear life, as there are ruts six inches or more deep now and then, and these baby carriages are frail.

The gates of the palace are reached in an hour and a half from the city limits, and we proceed to apply the universal key for their unlocking. Of course John Chinaman demands our pass. We have none —then we “cannot enter.” John moves off with much dignity, all the while keeping his eye on us, to see that we do not do the same. He wants that key, but does not want to show his desires too plainly. Finally he agrees to take one of us to see the General-in-charge, and I am selected for the task. A dusty, hot walk of a mile and a half brings me to his quarters, where after much palaver the second in command tells me that it is of no use unless we have a pass. But he does not go away, and neither do I. He walks all round the court a few times, and I wait. Then after a few murmured words to our guide I learn that for ten dollars (Chinese,—four dollars in American money) we will be allowed to enter, provided the General-in-charge does not see us and find it out, said General having taken good care to keep well in the background in order that he may not “find it out.” I promptly agree to the terms, and announce that half will be paid at once and half on our exit, and that we must see everything within the walls.

I might paint a very vivid picture of the beauties of this so-called “Paradise of China,”—who has not heard of it?—but I do not think I should be telling the truth. Just at the foot-hills of the mountains there has been constructed a large lake, rather stagnant at present. It has several bridges in marble,

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and is edged by a line of marble terraces. The hills are covered by a number of pagodas, rising tier above tier, generally of one room, of one story in height, and connected by arcades of wood. The pagodas are of wood painted red. Their yellow-tinted roofs are supported by wooden rafters most gaudily decorated—red, green, and blue being laid on in anything but good taste. In the centre of the panorama, as viewed from the lake, rises one very lofty circular pagoda of yellow tiles. Back of this, high on the rocks, stands the holy of holies where Buddha is enshrined. On the borders of the lake are numerous small pagodas of fantastic shapes. One in marble represents a paddle-wheel steamboat. The whole palace is on the small hills, which in turn are backed by the mountains, and it is its location and not the palace itself which holds the claim to beauty. The buildings are certainly too gaudy to attract, and remind one of many at our late fairs. There is absolutely none of the stately beauty of the Ming Tombs.

But let us enter some of these many pavilions; and here, no matter what your horror against the Chinese may be, you will feel indignant at the useless, barbarous destruction which has simply run riot. In that portion of the palace occupied by the Italian soldiers not a pavilion has escaped most outrageous treatment. The fine cabinet-work of which most of these interiors is composed has been torn and hacked to pieces, large mirrors smashed, latticed windows knocked out bodily, while in the main pagoda the great statue of Buddha has been pulled down and broken to pieces. Even the heavy bronze statues



THRONE OF THE SUMMER PALACE.



of the god are defaced in a most shocking, shameful manner.

What would Italy say if an invader were to deal such destruction amidst the monuments and art treasures of Rome? What was accomplished by a war upon inanimate objects by a nation which holds the capital of the Christian world,—of the world of art? Further comment is unnecessary.

To the credit of England be it said that here and wherever her soldiers held possession there has been no such work. In one pavilion she found art treasures of enormous value, all of which she had properly boxed up, and thus they stand to-day—uninjured, awaiting the return of their owners.

We ate our luncheon in the boudoir of the Empress on board the marble boat, where a great plate mirror had been smashed to fragments. There is little satisfaction in a visit to the Summer Palace as it stands to-day, and its condition is such that the Court certainly cannot come here for a long time (as it turns out it does not until almost the 1st of October).





## CHAPTER XXIV

### LIFE IN PEKIN

THE monument to the unfortunate Baron Ketteler is considered to be an object-lesson to these people, but I am told that they resent it intensely. It is placed upon the site of his death, in the centre of the principal business street of Pekin. To my thinking it is a useless and dangerous object. With full sympathy for the dead man and horror of the brutalities of that uprising, still it is surely unnecessary to do that which excites indignation and a desire for future vengeance, and when the next trouble comes, as come it will, there will be many a blow struck and life lost because of that monument, and is it worth a single life?

This Empress will learn by experience; we shall not be so fortunate as the last time, and Pekin may be another Cawnpore when we do get within her walls. They had no chance for torture during the last trouble, but they may have ample time during the next one, and for refinement of torture these Chinese have no equal on God's earth. It is but lately that they tied a poor creature down on an ant heap and, digging a hole in his side, they inserted a

tube of wood therein, having previously poured some honey into its inner end to attract the ants,—the result being that, the honey consumed, they literally ate the man alive. Think of it, then, if you can, and place some one you love in the poor creature's place. I think the fewer monuments—which do no good to the dead—which the powers erect or force China to erect, as in this case, the one less chance we have of knowing that some dear one has been placed on the ant-hill.

Pekin is not a business city. It is hoped that the railways now constructing may make it such, but I fancy Tien-tsin or some seaport will retain that position for all China north of Shanghai. If that is the case, and many believe it, why not allow China to have her Imperial and sacred city to herself, as she wishes it? The Mohammedans have Mecca and the Thibetians, Lassa,—why should this great Empire be forced to yield her capital to foreign dominance? After all, it is hers and not ours. We do not really like the place,—every white man therein longs to get away from its dust and mud and probabilities of horrors. Would any civilised nation permit China to enter her borders and do as we are doing here? We will not let her people come into America at all if we can help it, and yet they only desire to do so for the same reason that the world comes here,—gain,—and certainly there is not enough of it in Pekin, nor ever will be, to justify what we pay and shall pay for it. If we have the seaports, let her have her capital and holy city. She will rest the more content and the world stand a lesser chance of a "yellow danger." As things in China move as slowly as the moral laws,

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all the diplomatic business could be conducted from Tien-tsin. The Chinese might attempt to close the treaty ports, but that would be well-nigh impossible, and succour from our own warships would be prompt and sure. Certainly the Government which the powers have seen fit to uphold has told us plainly that it does not wish us amongst its people, and above all will not have us here in Pekin.

What would we do under like circumstances? Their religion suits them,—they have tried it for thousands of years. They do not wish the mushroom growth called Christianity. We are determined that they shall believe as we do, whether they will or no, and we are determined to make money out of them even if we outrage every national and religious feeling to do so.

Many of the missionaries in this Empire hold very lucrative positions. There is no doubt that much trouble has arisen from the attempts of some of them to acquire property and interfere with the local government of the people. A disturbing question like that of the friars in the Philippines might be discovered in China.

It has always seemed to me that if God in His majesty and might desired all the nations of the world to worship as we do, He would have so ordered it, as He did the creation.

One thing is very certain. If the powers had held the cause of the missionaries and of an enlightened China really at heart, they would never have sanctioned the return of the Empress, even if by not doing so they imperilled the indemnity. A support of the Emperor, with a continuance of the reforms he

had instituted, would have insured an enormous field for our missionaries to work in, with a certainty of success,—such success as they have never so far dreamt of; would have insured what we call an enlightened China; would have removed in time all danger of a "yellow peril"; but with the Empress in power—or rather the False Eunuch—that Empire is indeed an Augean stable, and the powers have deliberately chosen to uphold the rule which makes it such and thereby imperilled the world's future. It may be said that unless permitted to return the Empress would have made away with the Emperor; then surely the end would justify the means in her case, and when once enticed back to where his safety would have been assured she should have been suppressed.

The cunning woman has completely fooled the dear "ladies" of the Legations,—given them "basket dogs" and wept "tears of repentance upon their red shirt-waists."

The Lama Temple just inside of the north wall of Pekin is one of the great points of interest in the city. Your ride to it will take you down the length of her greatest street, in which Baron Ketteler was killed,—a street that fairly boils and bubbles with the ever-changing panorama of Pekin life. Its elevated centre will be crowded with ox-carts and pony-carts, sedan-chairs, soldiers of all nations on horseback, and long strings of camels. Why they do not fall into the space on either side is a constant marvel to me, and an equal marvel is the agility with which my riki-sha is hauled and shoved by two boys at a rapid rate amongst the crowds of the side

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spaces,—one cannot call them sidewalks. A sudden turn to the right would land me inside of some shops, having demolished window and show-cases *en route*, while one to the left would pitch me head first into perhaps a tureen of hot, greasy stuff, or a caldron of bluing, or onto a man getting his head shaved. Land where you may you would demolish something, but such an accident rarely happens, and no one gets run over or struck.

However, the excitement is with one always, and is only over when one enters the precincts of the temple, and at once leaves the rush and roar of the world behind.

Vast courts are presided over by stately trees which shelter temple after temple where the lights on Buddha's shrines twinkle dimly in the cool darkness. Grotesque figures of dragons in stone and bronze stand around, while every roof flaunts its eaves upward towards the flickering leaves. Long trains of monks dressed all in dull yellow glide by, while two stately Lamas gowned in the same warm colour, with scarlet slashes here and there, and crest-like head-gears, also of yellow, pace sedately and with great dignity towards the shrines, from which the sounds of many bells float outward, now booming solemnly, now flung out in a wild discord. Shrine after shrine is passed, some with many gods, some with only one. Here the walls are covered with sacred banners of great age, while yonder temple is piled high with the books of the students, who sit in long rows before a raised bench of red wood. They squat on yellow cushions, and, while the Lamas pass sedately up one row and down another, keep

up a monotonous chant, passing the books onward as they read. Buddha sits on high and gazes outward and over them, as though he knew them not, and in the last temple, the innermost holy of holies, stands a gigantic statue of that god seventy-five feet in height, so high that to look in his face his worshippers must mount the surrounding platforms, but its very altitude and size deprive it of that inexplicable charm which belongs to most of the sitting statues of the great teacher.

The buildings of this monastery are of wood and of an age so great that the colour is subdued and beautiful. Its courts are cool and peaceful, a spot where any one of any faith might come for rest and reflection, if only the rapacious priests would let one alone. They are inveterate beggars, notwithstanding the fact that begging is forbidden by their sacred books, wherein they are commanded to pass on in silence, what they receive being unsolicited.

The Lamas, of course, never approach you, but the priests in charge fairly destroy your pleasure. How pure the faith as given out by Buddha! how corrupt these disciples of his to-day!

This is called the Lamasery of Eternal Peace, where fifteen hundred Mongol and Tibetan priests study the dogmas of Buddhism. It would seem that more time is spent in sleep or idleness than in attention to metaphysics, ascetic duties, astrology, and medicine.

There is supposed to be a living Buddha here, but we did not see him.

This is one of the most complete lamaseries in the Empire, and when the exercises are in progress,

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what with chanting, shouting, clanging of bells and cymbals, one cannot imagine a more noisy place.

The whole is beautiful to look at, but you leave it with no regret, and, when you do so, plunge at once into the noise and confusion of the street—but it is but for a moment this time, as the Temple of Confucius stands just across the way, and you will find there all that you have missed in the other, for as you enter its outer courts the sorrow and distress, all the unanswered questions of your life, fall away for a time before its peaceful, calm dignity,—an outer court and an inner court, through which you may rove at will, while the one attendant locks you in and returns to his dreams on his couch by the portal.

In the outer court, ranged in double rows around the wall, and shaded by stately trees, are what appear to be tall headstones, and you of course imagine that the dead sleep here; but no, these are but the record of those, mostly long since dead, who have here passed their highest examination in the old classics; so that here is the complete catalogue in stone of all those who have graduated for five hundred years. The lines of stones as they march around the court are broken only by the gate whereby you enter, and by yonder stately portal which leads to the inner court.

On either side of the terrace stand some strange-looking, dark stone drums. They are of the reign of King Süen, before Confucius—eight hundred years prior to the birth of Christ. Covered with poetry in the old seal character they form the most ancient remains of Chinese literature. Passing beyond them and through the portal to the inner court

the traveller will find another terrace, with its flight of steps leading down to a broad avenue, bordered on either side by cedars of great age and size with wide-spreading arms; parallel with them are double rows of small pagodas, each holding a great turtle, that emblem of longevity, in stone, which bears on its back a tall tablet of marble, whereon is inscribed the account of some old triumphant battle.

At the far end of the avenue rises the main hall, on its wide terrace of richly sculptured marble, one-storied, spacious, and lofty. Its interior holds but its forest of old teak columns and its tablets—nothing else—that in the shrine bearing the inscription, “The tablet of the soul of the most holy ancestral teacher, Confucius.” The tablets on either side are those of four distinguished sages, while those of lesser merit are below them. Each Emperor presents a tablet in praise of Confucius, and these are placed on the inner side of the roof.

Those who come here come for meditation and reverie, for study and reflection, and there must be nothing to divert man from the contemplation of the higher worlds of thought. The very sculptures outside are reposed in character. Mark that turtle asleep, and those folded lotus buds; even the cedars seem wrapped in eternal calm, and the distant murmurs from the world without but add to the peace of the soul. One desires to stay on in a place like this for ever, and the light of the setting sun glides from the cedars upward until it rests on the last upturned ridge-pole of the temple before one can move to depart.

The old man at the gate awakens for a moment

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only, as we drop his fee into his hat, and, smiling, goes to sleep again.

Close by the Confucian temple, in a secluded court, one finds the Hall of Classics. But for a little Chinese boy I should have missed it. It was evidently a favourite spot of his, for he had endeavoured to get me to visit it yesterday when I made my first pilgrimage to the Confucian shrine. To-day his determination was such that it bore me along to a portal far in the rear. After many whistles and catcalls I noticed the tall weeds in an adjoining lot moving, and out from them shortly appeared a small boy bearing a key almost his equal in size. The two boys had an earnest consultation, and, after inspecting me closely, decided to admit me, which was done in a most solemn manner.

There is a very fine central hall and a very beautiful porcelain arch of yellow with three portals. Here are also two hundred upright stone monuments engraved on both sides, holding a complete text of the "nineking" or classical books,—very highly prized and very ancient. This is a spot which few travellers ever enter; indeed, I find Pekin full of quaint corners.



THE TARTAR WALL OF PEKIN, SHOWING THE GATE OF SUBLIME LEARNING.



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## CHAPTER XXV

### TARTAR CITY AND TEMPLE OF HEAVEN

**A**S the observer stands on the great central gate in the Tartar wall,—the one near the entrance to the forbidden city,—all Pekin lies spread out around him.

In the middle distance clusters the Chinese city, through whose centre, straight from the gate where you stand, stretches southward a broad stone avenue away to the Chinese Wall, with the Temples of Heaven and Earth rising on either side in the farthest distance.

Below you is a marble bridge, and from it, beneath the gates, passes the main avenue to the forbidden city.

As you turn towards it, with your back to the Chinese city, the majestic walls of the Tartar town stretch off to right and left, with many square bastions and stately pagodas over each gateway. These walls are forty feet high and thirty wide on their top. The avenue to the forbidden city passes beneath you, and a block or two away stands the first gateway,—a square structure of brick painted red, and with a yellow tiled roof, turned up at its corners.

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Three doors, closed now, give entrance to the great beyond.

There are seven of these gateways to be passed before you are really within the sacred precincts, which even from here you can see are composed of numberless pagodas and pavilions, the latter generally one-storied. All are red and all have the same yellow tiled roofs with flaunting dragon-tails.

A park of great size encloses the palaces, and the whole is surrounded by a high wall of brick, painted red with a yellow tiled top.

The Tartar city clusters all around this great centre, and stretches off and away beyond it, to where the northern walls and those to the east and west cut it off short and sharp.

To your immediate right as you stand on the gateway and along the wall lies the foreign concession, holding all the legations, etc., and the scene of the late bombardment.

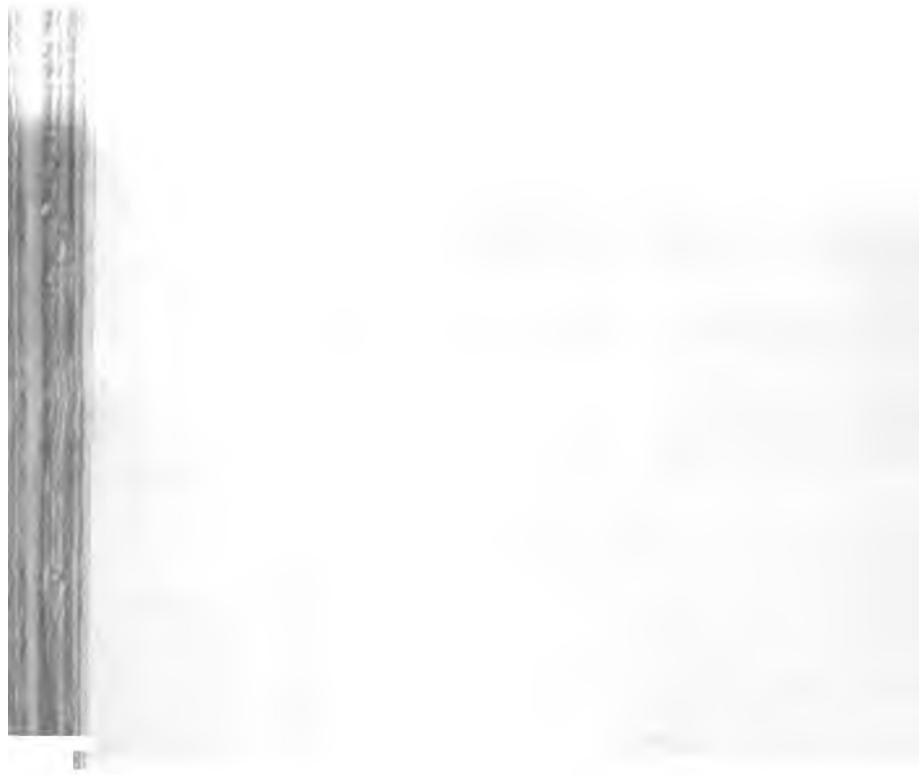
The water-gate, through which the British entered, is about a half-mile to your right, and in reaching it you will pass above the American concession, the British lying just next to it away from the wall.

This foreign concession now stands isolated from all the town with the wall at its back. The space between it and the present line of Chinese houses was cleared out by the allies and will so remain, and it was in the destruction of all that mass of houses that much looting was done.

The avenue where Baron Von Ketteler lost his life leads from the gate on your right, straight through the Tartar town. It is the eastern avenue of that

THE TEMPLE OF HEAVEN, PEKIN.





## Tartar City and Temple of Heaven 233

section, running parallel with the eastern wall, while the Lama temples and Temple of Confucius are at its northern end, the former on the right- and latter on the left-hand-side.

A strong glass would show you the Summer Palace, ten miles off to the north-west.

Pass down the broad stone avenue which leads south from the central gate of the Tartar city, and on the left at its extreme end, near the Chinese Wall, you will find the Temple of Heaven. At first sight it appears to be but a vast enclosure a mile square, surrounded by a high wall over which waving trees bid you a welcome. Enter by the one portal visible, and you will pass under the peaceful shadows of a forest, as sylvan and cool as though a hundred miles from the city, whose sounds will cease and life vanish as you enter into this abode of eternal calm.

Is the Temple of Heaven, after all, nothing save a forest? With these Celestials are the groves really God's first temples? A solitary attendant will follow you as you pass down the leafy glades. There are no grinning dragons, no flying tails here, nor statues of any god. Only space and light, and the trees, with a blue sky overhead.

Finally, as you approach the centre of the enclosure, you will see to your left a circular temple with a cone-shaped triple roof, all dull green, deep blue, and dark crimson. Rising a hundred feet above its terrace it forms one of the most conspicuous objects of the city, and this is generally called the Temple of Heaven, and when you enter it, aside from some tablets, there is—nothing. You will find no graven

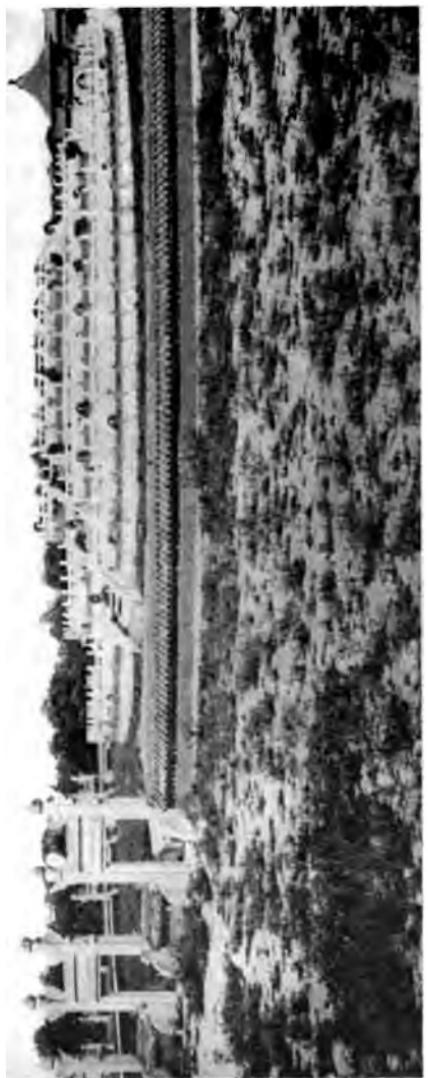
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image, see no living thing. If you are one of the faithful, you should come here for meditation, and there will be nothing to distract your thoughts. Even the light which filters in through rods of blue glass seems to hold little in common with this world.

But leave this, cross the park to its farther side, and, to my thinking, you will find a more fitting temple. The trees spread away here, leaving a wide space, from the centre of which rises a circular terrace of purest white marble one hundred feet in diameter, tier after tier, each encircled by a richly carved balustrade, and when you have reached the top you will find an expanse of more white marble, nothing else,—no altar of any sort,—and here the "Son of Heaven" comes to offer up his sacrifice direct to heaven itself. He must spend the night in fasting and meditation, he must come here as pure as a man may be, and here offer up his sacrifices to purity itself.

Near by is the furnace for the burnt offerings and the high poles for the lanterns, as the sacrifices must take place before dawn.

This worship of heaven is a most interesting remnant of the ancient monotheistic cultus, which prevailed in China before either Confucius or Buddha impressed their beliefs upon the land. The absence of images, the offering of whole burnt bullocks, reminds one of the ancient customs of the Hebrews and Greeks. The sacrifices are kept up with the utmost severity, the chief one coming in the winter solstice. On December 20th the offerings of an elephant carriage are sent with great array to the temple, and the Emperor follows the next day in a



SACRIFICIAL ALTAR, TEMPLE OF HEAVEN, PÉKIN.

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## Tartar City and Temple of Heaven 235

sedan-chair covered with gorgeous yellow silk and carried by thirty-two men. There are musicians, princes, and high officials on horseback to an immense number in his train. He offers incense to heaven and to his ancestors, and is then conveyed in his elephant carriage to the Palace of Abstinence, where he can neither eat, drink, nor sleep. The next morning, before sunrise, he puts on his sacrificial robes and goes to the southern gate of the outer enclosure, and to the great altar, where a yellow tent has been erected on the second terrace. The moment he arrives at the spot where he kneels, the sacrificial fires are lighted and music is heard. Mounting to the upper terrace he kneels, burns incense before heaven and to his ancestors. Then, with three genuflections and one prostration, he makes offerings of silk, jade cups, and other gifts. At last he receives, kneeling, the cup of "happiness" and "flesh of happiness." As the dawn breaks all return to the palace in gorgeous array.

My inspection of Pekin ended with the Temple of Heaven. One more last wild riki-sha ride through the wide streets of the city bubbling over with life; one last glimpse of the glittering roofs of the forbidden town, a lurch and a turn, and I am outside her great gateway and dumped upon the railway platform, from which, bag and baggage, I am promptly transferred by the English attendants to the train, which makes no motion to get under way for another hour. But go it does at last, and we rattle off in joyous fashion, fans fluttering, pigtails flying in the wind. Onward through the paddy-fields of the

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Chinese town, and through the great south wall, when, turning, we move rapidly southward until Pekin has vanished into the hazy, dusty distance. A swift trip to the sea, a glimpse of beautiful Japan, a peaceful voyage homeward, a good-night, and a good-bye.





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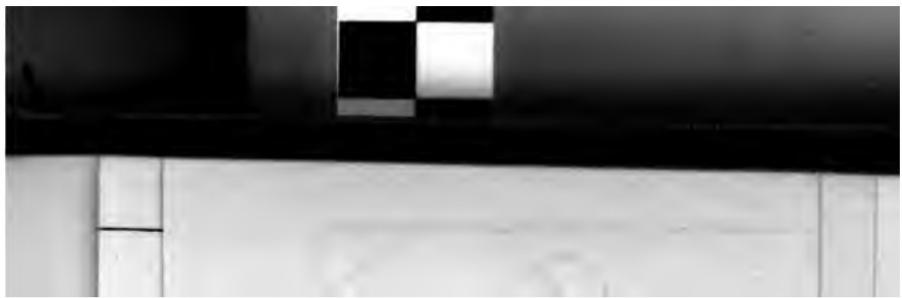
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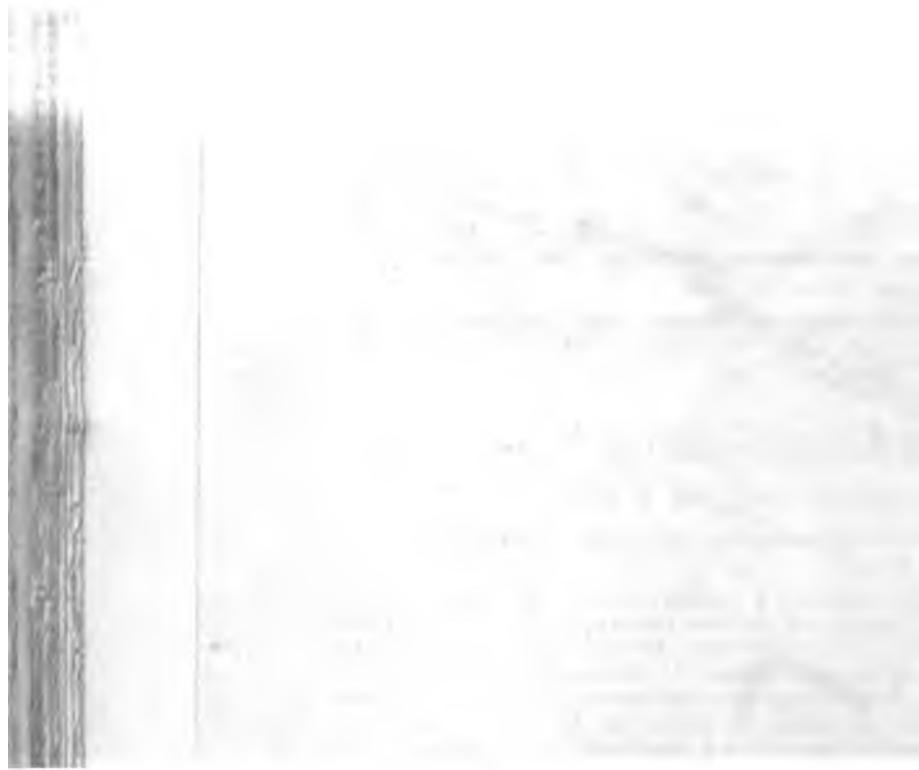
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